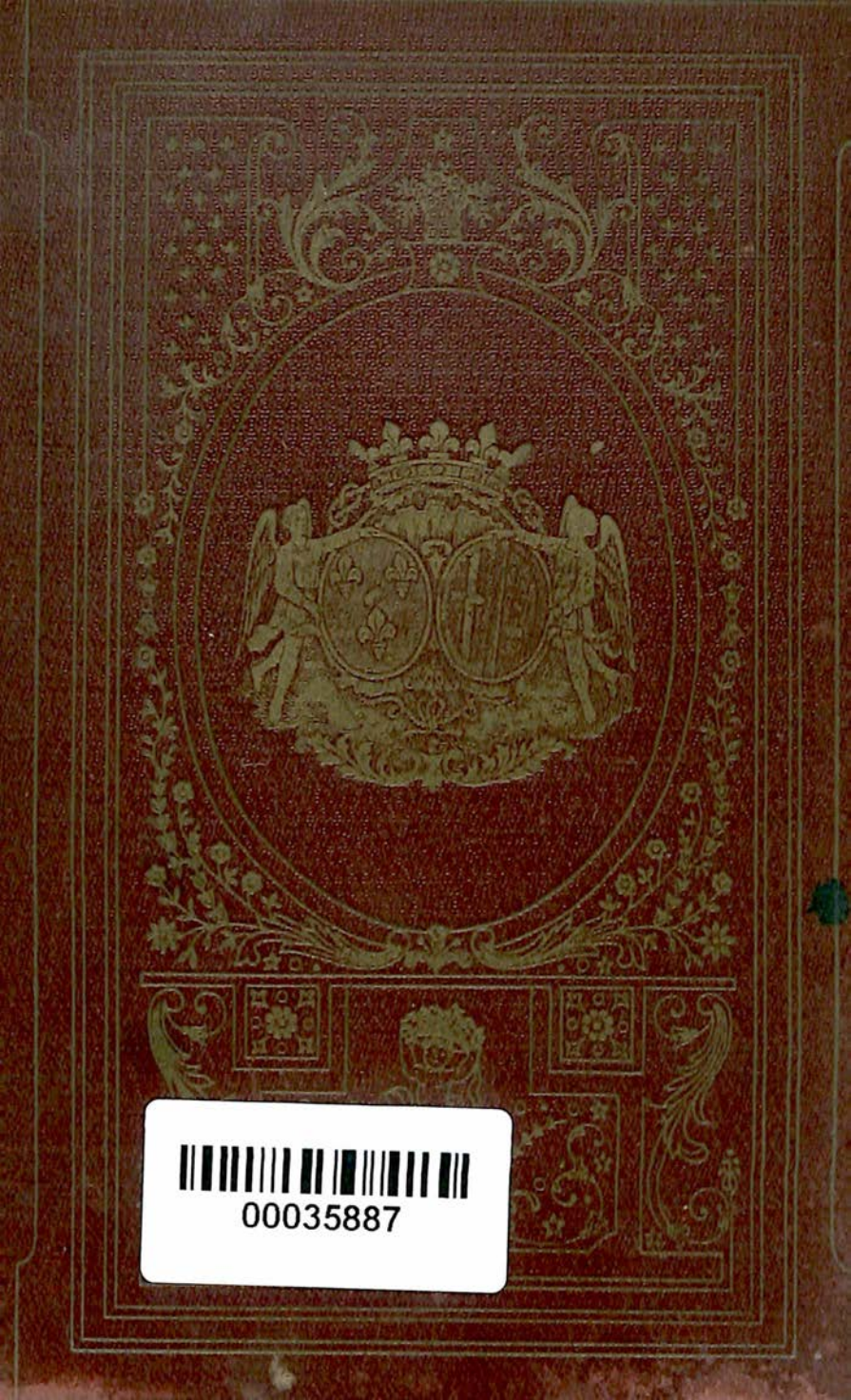
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Secret and Historic Memoirs

of the

COURTS OF FRANCE

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THE ROYAL FAMILY OF FRANCE

DURING THE REVOLUTION

From the Journal and Letters of the Princess Lamballe

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

In Two Volumes

Volume One

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SECRET MEMOIRS

OF THE

ROYAL FAMILY OF FRANCE

INTRODUCTION

I SHOULD consider it great presumption to intrude upon the public anything respecting myself, were there any other way of establishing the authenticity of the facts and papers I am about to present. To the history of my own peculiar situation, amid the great events I record, which made me the depositary of information and documents so important, I proceed, therefore, though reluctantly, without further preamble.

In the title-page of this work I have stated that I was for many years in the confidential service of the Princess Lamballe, and that the most important materials, which form my history, have been derived

not only from the conversations, but the private papers of my lamented patroness. It remains for me to show how I became acquainted with Her Highness, and by what means the papers I allude to came into my possession.

Though, from my birth, and the rank of those who were the cause of it (had it not been from political motives kept from my knowledge), in point of interest I ought to have been very independent, I was indebted for my resources in early life to His Grace the late Duke of Norfolk and Lady Mary Duncan. By them I was placed for education in the Irish Convent, Rue du Bacq, Fauxbourg St. Germain, at Paris, where the immortal Sacchini, the instructor of the Queen, gave me lessons in music Pleased with my progress, the celebrated composer, when one day teaching Maria Antoinette, so highly over-rated to that illustrious lady my infant natural talents and acquired science in his art, in the presence of her very shadow, the Princess Lamballe, as to excite in Her Majesty an eager desire for the opportunity of hearing me, which the Princess volunteered to obtain by going herself to the convent next morning with Sacchini.

It was enjoined upon the composer, as I afterwards learned, that he was neither to apprise me who Her Highness was, nor to what motive I was indebted for her visit. To this Sacchini readily agreed, adding, after disclosing to them my connections and situation, "Your Majesty will be, perhaps, still more surprised, when I, as an Italian, and her German master, who is a German, declare that she speaks both these languages like a native, though born in England; and is as well disposed to the Catholic faith, and as well versed in it, as if she had been a member of that Church all her life.

This last observation decided my future good fortune: there was no interest in the minds of the Queen and Princess paramount to that of making proselytes to their creed.

The Princess, faithful to her promise, accompanied Sacchini. Whether it was chance, ability, or good fortune, let me not attempt to conjecture; but from that moment, I became the *protége* of this ever-regretted angel. Political circumstances presently facilitated her introduction of me to the Queen. My combining a readiness in the Italian and German languages, with my knowledge of

English and French, greatly promoted my power of being useful at that crisis, which, with some claims to their confidence of a higher order, made this august, lamented, injured pair, more like mothers to me than mistresses, till we were parted by their murder.

The circumstances I have just mentioned show that to mere curiosity, the characteristic passion of our sex and so often its ruin, I am to ascribe the introduction, which was only prevented by events unparalleled in history from proving the most fortunate in my life as it is the most cherished in my recollection.

It will be seen in the course of the following pages, how often I was employed on confidential missions, frequently by myself, and, in some instances, as the attendant of the Princess. The nature of my situation, the trust reposed in me, the commissions with which I was honoured, and the affecting charges of which I was the bearer, flattered my pride and determined me to make myself an exception to the rule that "no woman can keep a secret." Few ever knew exactly where I was, what I was doing, and

much less the importance of my occupation. I had passed from England to France, made two journeys to Italy and Germany, three to the Arch-Duchess Maria Christiana, Governess of the Low Countries, and returned back to France, before any of my friends in England were aware of my retreat, or of my ever having accompanied the Princess. Though my letters were written and dated at Paris, they were all forwarded to England by way of Holland or Germany, that no clue should be given for annoyances from idle curiosity. It is to this discreetness, to this inviolable secrecy, firmness, and fidelity, which I so early in life displayed to the august personages who stood in need of such a person, that I owe the unlimited confidence of my illustrious benefactress, through which I was furnished with the valuable materials I am now submitting to the public.

I was repeatedly a witness, by the side of the Princess Lamballe, of the appalling scenes of the *bonnet rouge*, of murders *à la lanterne*, and of numberless criminal insults to the unfortunate royal family of Louis XVI., when the Queen was

generally selected as the most marked victim of malicious indignity. Having had the honour of so often beholding this much-injured Queen, and never without remarking how amiable in her manners, how condescendingly kind in her deportment towards everyone about her, how charitably generous, and withal, how beautiful she was; I looked upon her as a model of perfection. But when I found the public feeling so much at variance with my own, the difference became utterly unaccountable. I longed for some explanation of the mystery. One day I was insulted in the Tuileries, because I had alighted from my horse to walk there without wearing the national ribbon. On this I met the Princess: the conversation which grew out of my adventure emboldened me to question her on a theme to me inexplicable.

"What," asked I, "can it be, which makes the people so outrageous against the Queen?"

Her Highness condescended to reply in the complimentary terms which I am about to relate, but without answering my question.

"My dear friend!" exclaimed she, "for from this moment I beg you will consider me in that

light,—never having been blessed with children of my own, I feel there is no way of acquitting myself of the obligations you have heaped upon me, by the fidelity with which you have executed the various commissions entrusted to your charge, but by adopting you as one of my own family. I am satisfied with you, yes, highly satisfied with you, on the score of your religious principles[1]; and as soon as the troubles subside, and we have a little calm after them, my father-in-law and myself will be present at the ceremony of your confirmation."

The goodness of my benefactress silenced me: gratitude would not allow me to persevere for the moment. But from what I had already seen of Her Majesty the Queen, I was too much interested to lose sight of my object,—not, let me be believed, from idle womanish curiosity, but from that real, strong, personal interest which I, in common with all who ever had the honour of being in her presence, felt for that much-injured, most engaging sovereign.

---

1 I was at that time, by her orders, under examination by Monsieur de Brienne, for being confirmed to receive the sacrament.

A propitious circumstance unexpectedly occurred, which gave me an opportunity, without any appearance of officious earnestness, to renew the attempt to gain the end I had in view.

I was riding in the carriage with the Princess Lamballe, when a lady drove by, who saluted my benefactress with marked attention and respect. There was something in the manner of the Princess, after receiving the salute, which impelled me, spite of myself, to ask who the lady was.

"Madame de Genlis," exclaimed Her Highness, with a shudder of disgust, "that lamb's face with a wolf's heart, and a fox's cunning." Or, to quote her own Italian phrase which I have here translated, "*colla faccia d'agnello, il cuore d'un lupo, e la dritura della volpe.*"

In the course of these pages the cause of this strong feeling against Madame de Genlis will be explained. To dwell on it now would only turn me aside from my narrative. To pursue my story, therefore:

When we arrived at my lodgings (which were then, for private reasons, at the Irish Convent, where Sacchini and other masters attended to

further me in the accomplishments of the fine arts), "Sing me something," said the Princess, "*Cantate mi qualche cosa*, for I never see that woman" (meaning Madame de Genlis) "but I feel ill and out of humour. I wish it may not be the foreboding of some great evil!"

I sang a little rondo, in which Her Highness and the Queen always delighted, and which they would never set me free without making me sing, though I had given them twenty before it.[1] Her Highness honoured me with even more than usual praise. I kissed the hand which had so generously applauded my infant talents, and said, "Now, my dearest Princess, as you are so kind and good-humoured, tell me something about the Queen!"

She looked at me with her eyes full of tears. For an instant they stood in their sockets as if petrified: and then, after a pause, "I cannot," answered she in Italian, as she usually did, "I cannot refuse you anything. *Non posso negarti niente.* It would take me an age to tell you the

1 The rondo I allude to was written by Sarti for the celebrated Marchesi, *Lungi da te ben mio*, and is the same in which he was so successful in England, when he introduced it in London in the opera of *Giulo Sabino*.

many causes which have conspired against this much-injured Queen! I fear none who are near her person will escape the threatening storm that hovers over our heads. The leading causes of the clamour against her have been, if you must know, Nature; her beauty; her power of pleasing; her birth; her rank; her marriage; the King himself; her mother; her imperfect education; and, above all, her unfortunate partialities for the Abbé Vermond; for the Duchess de Polignac; for myself, perhaps; and last, but not least, the thorough unsuspecting goodness of her heart!

"But, since you seem to be so much concerned for her exalted, persecuted Majesty, you shall have a Journal I myself began on my first coming to France and which I have continued ever since I have been honoured with the confidence of Her Majesty, in graciously giving me that unlooked-for situation at the head of her household, which honour and justice prevent my renouncing under any difficulties, and which I never will quit but with my life!"

She wept as she spoke, and her last words were almost choked with sobs.

Seeing her so much affected, I humbly begged pardon for having unintentionally caused her tears, and begged permission to accompany her to the Tuileries.

"No," said she, "you have hitherto conducted yourself with a profound prudence, which has insured you my confidence. Do not let your curiosity change your system. You shall have the Journal. But be careful. Read it only by yourself, and do not show it to anyone. On these conditions you shall have it."

I was in the act of promising, when Her Highness stopped me.

"I want no particular promises. I have sufficient proofs of your adherence to truth. Only answer me simply in the affirmative."

I said I would certainly obey her injunctions most religiously.

She then left me, and directed that I should walk in a particular part of the private alleys of the Tuileries, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. I did so; and from her own hand I there received her private Journal.

In the following September of this same year (1792) she was murdered!

Journalising copiously, for the purpose of amassing authentic materials for the future historian, was always a favourite practice of the French, and seems to have been particularly in vogue in the age I mention. The press has sent forth whole libraries of these records since the Revolution, and it is notorious that Louis XV. left Secret Memoirs, written by his own hand, of what passed before this convulsion; and had not the papers of the Tuileries shared in the wreck of royalty, it would have been seen that Louis XVI. had made some progress in the memoirs of his time; and even his beautiful and unfortunate Queen had herself made extensive notes and collections for the record of her own disastrous career. Hence it must be obvious how one so nearly connected in situation and suffering with her much-injured mistress, as the Princess Lamballe, would naturally fall into a similar habit had she even no stronger temptation than fashion and example. But self-communion, by means of the pen, is invariably the consolation of strong, feeling, and reflecting minds under great calamities, especially when their intercourse with the world has been checked or poisoned by its malice.

The editor of these pages herself fell into the habit of which she speaks; and it being usual with her benefactress to converse with all the unreserve which every honest mind shows when it feels it can confide, her humble attendant, not to lose facts of such importance, commonly made notes of what she heard. In any other person's hands the Journal of the Princess would have been incomplete; especially as it was written in a rambling manner, and was never intended for publication. But connected by her confidential conversations with me, and the recital of the events to which I personally bear testimony, I trust it will be found the basis of a satisfactory record, which I pledge myself to be a true one.

I do not know, however, that, at my time of life, and after a lapse of thirty years, I should have been roused to the arrangement of the papers which I have combined to form this narrative, had I not met with the work of Madame Campan upon the same subject.

This lady has said much that is true respecting the Queen; but she has omitted much, and much she has misrepresented: not, I dare say, purposely;

but from ignorance, and being wrongly informed. She was often absent from the service, and on such occasions must have been compelled to obtain her knowledge at second-hand. She herself told me, in 1803, at Ecouen, that at a very important epoch the peril of her life forced her from the seat of action. With the Princess Lamballe, who was so much about the Queen, she never had any particular connexion. The Princess certainly esteemed her for her devotedness to the Queen: but there was a natural reserve in the Princess's character, and a mistrust resulting from circumstances of all those who saw much company as Madame Campan did. Hence no intimacy was encouraged. Madame Campan never came to the Princess without being sent for.

An attempt has been made since the Revolution utterly to destroy faith in the alleged attachment of Madame Campan to the Queen, by the fact of her having received the daughters of many of the regicides for education into her establishment at Ecouen. Far be it from me to sanction so unjust a censure. Although what I mention hurt her character very much in the estimation of her former friends, and constituted one of the grounds of the

dissolution of her establishment at Ecouen, on the restoration of the Bourbons, and may possibly in some degree have deprived her of such aids from their adherents, as might have made her work unquestionable, yet what else, let me ask, could have been done by one dependent upon her exertions for support, and in the power of Napoleon's family and his emissaries? On the contrary, I would give my public testimony in favour of the fidelity of her feelings, though in many instances I must withhold it from the fidelity of her narrative. Her being utterly isolated from the illustrious individual nearest to the Queen must necessarily leave much to be desired in her record. During the whole term of the Princess Lamballe's superintendence of the Queen's household, Madame Campan never had any special communication with my benefactress, excepting once, about the things which were to go to Brussels, before the journey to Varennes; and once again, relative to a person of the Queen's household, who had received the visits of Petion, the Mayor of Paris, at her private lodgings. This last communication I myself particularly remember, because on that

occasion the Princess, addressing me in her own native language, Madame Campan, observing it, considered me as an Italian, till, by a circumstance I shall presently relate, she was undeceived.

I should anticipate the order of events, and incur the necessity of speaking twice of the same things, were I here to specify the express errors in the work of Madame Campan. Suffice it now that I observe generally her want of knowledge of the Princess Lamballe; her omission of many of the most interesting circumstances of the Revolution; her silence upon important anecdotes of the King, the Queen, and several members of the first assembly; her mistakes concerning the Princess Lamballe's relations with the Duchess de Polignac, Count de Fersan, Mirabeau, the Cardinal de Rohan, and others; her great miscalculation of the time when the Queen's confidence in Barnave began, and when that of the Empress-mother in Rohan ended; her misrepresentation of particulars relating to Joseph II.; and her blunders concerning the affair of the necklace, and regarding the libel Madame Lamotte published in England with the connivance of Calonne:—all these will be con-

sidered, with numberless other statements equally requiring correction in their turn. What she has omitted I trust I shall supply; and where she has gone astray I hope to set her right; that, between the two, the future biographer of my august benefactresses may be in no want of authentic materials to do full justice to their honoured memories.

I said in a preceding paragraph that I should relate a circumstance about Madame Campan, which happened after she had taken me for an Italian and before she was aware of my being in the service of the Princess.

Madame Campan, though she had seen me not only at the time I mention but before and after, had always passed me without notice. One Sunday, when in the gallery of the Tuileries with Madame de Staël, the Queen, with her usual suite, of which Madame Campan formed one, was going according to custom to hear mass, her Majesty perceived me and most graciously addressed me in German. Madame Campan appeared greatly surprised at this, but walked on and said nothing. Ever afterwards, however, she treated me whenever we met with marked civility.

Another edition of Boswell to those who got a nod from Dr. Johnson!

The reader will find in the course of this work that on the 2nd of August, 1792, from the kindness and humanity of my august benefactresses, I was compelled to accept a mission to Italy, devised merely to send me from the sanguinary scenes of which they foresaw they and theirs must presently become victims. Early in the following month the Princess Lamballe was murdered. As my history extends beyond the period I have mentioned, it is fitting I should explain the indisputable authorities whence I derived such particulars as I did not see.

A person, high in the confidence of the Princess, through the means of the honest coachman of whom I shall have occasion to speak, supplied me with regular details of whatever took place, till she herself with the rest of the ladies and other attendants, being separated from the Royal Family, was immured in the prison of La Force. When I returned to Paris after this dire tempest, Madame Clery and her friend Madame de Beaumont, a natural daughter of

Louis XV., with Monsieur Chambon of Rheims, who never left Paris during the time, confirmed the correctness of my papers. The Madame Clery I mention is the same who assisted her husband in his faithful attendance upon the royal family in the Temple; and this exemplary man added his testimony to the rest, in presence of the Duchess de Guiche Grammont, at Pyrmont in Germany, when I there met him in the suite of the late sovereign of France, Louis XVIII., at a concert. After the 10th of August, I had also a continued correspondence with many persons at Paris, who supplied me with thorough accounts of the succeeding horrors, in letters directed to Sir William Hamilton, at Naples, and by him forwarded to me. And in addition to all these high sources, many particular circumstances have been disclosed to me by individuals, whose authority, when I have used it, I have generally affixed to the facts they have enabled me to communicate.

It now only remains for me to mention that I have endeavoured to arrange everything, derived either from the papers of the Princess Lamballe, or from her remarks, my own observation, or the

intelligence of others, in chronological order. It will readily be seen by the reader where the Princess herself speaks, as I have invariably set apart my own recollections and remarks in paragraphs and notes, which are not only indicated by the heading of each chapter, but by the context of the passages themselves. I have also begun and ended what the Princess says with inverted commas. All the earlier part of the work preceding her personal introduction proceeds principally from her pen or her lips: I have done little more than changed it from Italian into English, and embodied thoughts and sentiments that were often disjointed and detached. And throughout, whether she or others speak, I may safely say this work will be found the most circumstantial, and assuredly the most authentic, upon the subject of which it treats, of any that has yet been presented to the public of Great Britain. The press has been prolific in fabulous writings upon these times, which have been devoured with avidity. I hope John Bull is not so devoted to gilded foreign fictions as to spurn the unadorned truth from one of his downright countrywomen: and let me advise him *in*

passant, not to treat us beauties of native growth with indifference at home; for we readily find compensation in the regard, patronage, and admiration of every nation in Europe.[1] I am old now, and may speak freely.

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1 I wish it were in my power to include a certain lady in these kingdoms, who has recently written upon Italy, in my contrast between British accuracy and foreign fable. This lady seems quite unencumbered by the fetters of truth. She has either been deceived, or would herself be the deceiver, respecting the replacing of the famous horses at Venice. I was present at that ceremony, and when I cast my eyes over the fiction of Lady Morgan upon the subject, it made me grieve to see the account of a country so very interesting and to me endeared by a residence of nearly thirty years, among real friends of humanity and general good faith, drawn by a hand so unhesitatingly inaccurate.

As for her account of the Emperor of Austria and Maria Louisa—Maria Louisa had never been at Venice at the time she mentions. When she did come there it was merely to condole with her imperial father for the loss of her cousin and mother-in-law, the Empress Lodovica, daughter of the Arch-duke of Milan, the third wife of the Emperor. This happened a considerable time after the restoration of the Golden Steeds of Lysippus. Besides, it was the Holy Week, *Settimnonæ Santæ*, when there are never theatrical performances in any part of Italy. The Court, too, from the event I have stated, was in deep mourning. Sometimes I myself may be misled, and papers which have been thirty years undisturbed, may retain inaccuracies. Still, whenever I assert from hearsay I have been careful—at least, I have

I have no interest whatever in the work I submit but that of endeavouring to redeem the character of so many injured victims. Would to Heaven my memory were less acute, and that I could obliterate from the knowledge of the world and posterity the names of their infamous destroyers I mean not the executioners who terminated their mortal existence — for in their miserable situation that early martyrdom was an act of grace — but I mean some, perhaps still living, who with foul cowardice, stabbing like assassins in the dark, undermined their fair fame and morally murdered them, long before their deaths, by daily traducing virtues the slanderers never possessed from mere jealousy of the glory they knew themselves incapable of deserving.

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endeavoured so to do—to save my credit under the shield, beneath which all writers have it in their power to take shelter, the never failing *salva con dotta*, the *on dit*. But neither the Count nor the Countess Cicognara, whatever their private reasons may be to be dissatisfied with the conduct of the Austrian Government relative to themselves, could ever have asserted such flagrant falsehoods to Lady Morgan; the circumstances being too notorious even to the Ciceroni of the Piazza, whose ignorance has spoiled the books of so many of her ladyship's predecessors.

Montesquieu says, "If there be a God, He must be just!" That divine justice, after centuries, has been fully established on the descendants of the cruel, sanguinary conquerors of South America and its butchered harmless Emperor Montezuma, and his innocent offspring, who are now teaching Spain a moral lesson in freeing themselves from its insatiable thirst for blood and wealth, while God Himself has refused that blessing to the Spaniards which they denied to the Americans[1]! Oh, France! what hast thou not already suffered, and what hast thou not yet to suffer, when to thee, like Spain, it shall visit their descendants even unto the fourth generation?

To my insignificant losses in so mighty a ruin perhaps I ought not to allude. I should not presume even to mention that the fatal convulsion

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1 The constitutional members, who were gloriously fighting in the field of liberty to rescue a rising generation from tyranny and superstitious bigotry (an operation commenced on the foundation of the law of the land, delegated to the nation by its chosen representatives and sacredly guaranteed through the sanction of a constitutional king, who now, with the rest of the Spanish nation, is in jeopardy, a prisoner, and dependent on a foreign sovereign), now expiate in turn the bloody crimes of their ancestors on the nations so long held by them in savage and unnatural bondage!

which shook all Europe and has since left the nations in that state of agitated undulation which succeeds a tempest upon the ocean, were it not for the opportunity it gives me to declare the bounty of my benefactresses. All my own property went down in the wreck; and the mariner who escapes only with his life can never recur to the scene of his escape without a shudder. Many persons are still living, of the first respectability, who well remember my quitting this country, though very young, on the budding of a brilliant career. Had those prospects been followed up they would have placed me beyond the caprice of fickle fortune. But the dazzling lustre of crown favours and princely patronage outweighed the slow, though more solid hopes of self-achieved independence. I certainly was then almost a child, and my vanity, perhaps, of the honour of being useful to two such illustrious personages got the better of every other sentiment. But now when I reflect, I look back with consternation on the many risks I ran, on the many times I stared death in the face with no fear but that of being obstructed in my efforts to serve, even with my

life, the interests dearest to my heart — that of implicit obedience to these truly benevolent and generous Princesses, who only wanted the means to render me as happy and independent as their cruel destiny has since made me wretched and miserable! Had not death deprived me of their patronage I should have had no reason to have regretted any sacrifice I could have made for them, for through the Princess, Her Majesty, unasked, had done me the honour to promise me the reversion of a most lucrative as well as highly respectable post in her employ. In these august personages I lost my best friends; I lost everything — except the tears, which bathe the paper as I write — tears of gratitude, which will never cease to flow to the memory of their martyrdom.

CHAPTER I

JOURNAL COMMENCED—EMPRESS MARIA THERESA, MOTHER OF MARIA ANTOINETTE—HER POLITICAL VIEWS IN ALL THE MARRIAGES OF HER DAUGHTERS—FATE OF THE ARCH-DUCHESS JOSEPHA—ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPHA, THE ARCH-DUCHESS CAROLINA WEDS THE KING OF NAPLES—MARIA THERESA'S REMONSTRANCE WITH THE COURT OF NAPLES, ON HER DAUGHTER'S TREATMENT—THE DAUGHTER REMONSTRATES MORE PROMPTLY AND EFFECTUALLY — MARIA ANTOINETTE DESTINED FOR FRANCE — MADAME POMPADOUR—FRENCH HATRED TO AUSTRIA—VERMOND RECOMMENDED BY BRIENNE AS MARIA ANTOINETTE'S TUTOR—HE BECOMES A TOOL OF AUSTRIA—LIMITED EDUCATION OF MARIA ANTOINETTE—HER FONDNESS FOR BALLS AND PRIVATE PLAYS—METASTASIO — DU BARRY — OBSERVATIONS OF THE EDITOR ON MARIA THERESA'S SACRIFICE OF HER DAUGHTERS TO HER POLICY

"THE character of Maria Theresa, the Empress-mother of Maria Antoinette, is sufficiently known. The same spirit of ambition and enterprise which had already animated her contentions with France in the latter part of her career impelled her to wish for its alliance. In addition to other hopes, she

had been encouraged to imagine that Louis XV. might one day aid her in recovering the provinces which the King of Prussia had violently wrested from her ancient dominions. She felt the many advantages to be derived from an union with her ancient enemy, and she looked for its accomplishment by the marriage of her daughter.

"Policy, in sovereigns, is paramount to every other consideration. They regard beauty as a source of profit, like managers of theatres, who, when a female candidate is offered, ask whether she is young and handsome?—not whether she has talent. Maria Theresa believed that her daughter's beauty would have proved more powerful over France than her own armies. Like Catharine II., her envied contemporary, she consulted no ties of nature in the disposal of her children; a system more in character where the knout is the logician than among nations boasting higher civilization: indeed her rivalry with Catharine even made her grossly neglect their education. Jealous of the rising power of the North, she saw that it was the purpose of Russia to counteract her views in Poland and Turkey through France, and so

totally forgot her domestic duties in the desire to thwart the ascendency of Catharine that she often suffered eight or ten days to go by without even seeing her children, allowing even the essential sources of instruction to remain unprovided. Her very caresses were scarcely given but for display, when the children were admitted to be shown to some great personage; and if they were overwhelmed with kindness, it was merely to excite a belief that they were the constant care and companions of her leisure hours. When they grew up they became the mere instruments of her ambition. The fate of one of them will show how their mother's worldliness was rewarded.[1]

"A leading object of Maria Theresa's policy was the attainment of influence over Italy. For this purpose she first married one of the archduchesses to the imbecile Duke of Parma. Her second manœuvre was to contrive that Charles III. should seek the Arch-duchess Josepha for his

1 The Princess, could she have looked into the book of Fate, might have said the fate of *two;* but the most persecuted victim was not at that time sacrificed.

younger son, the King of Naples. When everything had been settled, and the ceremony by proxy had taken place, it was thought proper to sound the Princess as to how far she felt inclined to aid her mother's designs in the Court of Naples. 'Scripture says,' was her reply 'that when a woman is married she belongs to the country of her husband.'

"'But the policy of State?' exclaimed Maria Theresa.

"'Is that above religion?' cried the Princess

"This unexpected answer of the Arch-duchess was so totally opposite to the views of the Empress that she was for a considerable time undecided whether she would allow her daughter to depart, till, worn out by perplexities, she at last consented, but bade the Arch-duchess, previous to setting off for this much-desired country of her new husband, to go down to the tombs, and in the vaults of her ancestors offer up to Heaven a fervent prayer for the departed souls of those she was about to leave.

"Only a few days before that, a Princess had been buried in the vaults—I think Joseph the

Second's second wife, who had died of the small-pox.

"The Arch-duchess Josepha obeyed her imperial mother's cruel commands, took leave of all her friends and relatives, as if conscious of the result, caught the same disease, and in a few days died!

"The Arch-duchess Carolina was now tutored to become her sister's substitute, and when deemed adequately qualified was sent to Naples, where she certainly never forgot she was an Austrian nor the interest of the Court of Vienna. One circumstance concerning her and her mother fully illustrates the character of both. On the marriage, the Arch-duchess found that Spanish etiquette did not allow the Queen to have the honour of dining at the same table as the King. She apprised her mother. Maria Theresa instantly wrote to the Marchese Tenucei, then Prime Minister at the Court of Naples, to say, that if her daughter, now Queen of Naples, was to be considered less than the King her husband, she would send an army to fetch her back to Vienna, and the King might purchase a Georgian slave, for an Austrian Princess

should not be thus humbled. Maria Theresa need not have given herself all this trouble, for before the letter arrived the Queen of Naples had dismissed all the ministry, upset the cabinet of Naples, and turned out even the King himself from her bedchamber! So much for the overthrow of Spanish etiquette by Austrian policy. The King of Spain became outrageous at the influence of Maria Theresa, but there was no alternative.

"The other daughter of the Empress was married, as I have observed already, to the Duke of Parma for the purpose of promoting the Austrian strength in Italy against that of France, to which the Court of Parma, as well as that of Modena, had been long attached.

"The fourth Arch-duchess, Maria Antoinette, being the youngest and most beautiful of the family, was destined for France. There were three older than Maria Antoinette; but she, being much lovelier than her sisters, was selected on account of her charms. Her husband was never considered by the contrivers of the scheme: he was known to have no sway whatever, not even in the choice of his own wife! But the

character of Louis XV. was recollected, and calculations drawn from it, upon the probable power which youth and beauty might obtain over such a King and Court.

"It was during the time when Madame Pompadour directed, not only the King, but all France with most despotic sway, that the union of the Arch-duchess Maria Antoinette with the grandson of Louis XV. was proposed. The plan received the warmest support of Choiseul, then Minister, and the ardent co-operation of Pompadour. Indeed it was to her, the Duke de Choiseul, and the Count de Mercy, the whole affair may be ascribed. So highly was she flattered by the attention with which Maria Theresa distinguished her, in consequence of her zeal, by presents and by the title 'dear cousin,' which she used in writing to her, that she left no stone unturned till the proxy of the Dauphin was sent to Vienna, to marry Maria Antoinette in his name.

"All the interest by which this union was supported could not, however, subdue a prejudice against it, not only among many of the Court, the cabinet, and the nation, but in the royal family

itself. France has never looked with complacency upon alliances with the House of Austria: enemies to this one avowed themselves as soon as it was declared. The daughters of Louis XV. openly expressed their aversion; but the stronger influence prevailed, and Maria Antoinette became the Dauphiness.

"Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, and afterwards of Sens, suggested the appointment of the Librarian of the College des Quatre Nations, the Abbé Vermond, as instructor to the Dauphiness in French. The Abbé Vermond was accordingly dispatched by Louis XV. to Vienna. The consequences of this appointment will be seen in the sequel. Perhaps not the least fatal of them arose from his gratitude to the Archbishop, who recommended him. In some years afterwards, influencing his pupil, when Queen, to help Brienne to the ministry, he did her and her kingdom more injury than their worst foes. Of the Abbé's power over Maria Antoinette there are various opinions; of his capacity there is but one—he was superficial and cunning. On his arrival at Vienna he became the tool of Maria Theresa. While there, he re-

ceived a salary as the daughter's tutor, and when he returned to France, a much larger one as the mother's spy. He was more ambitious to be thought a great man, in his power over his pupil, than a rich one. He was too jesuitical to wish to be deemed rich. He knew that superfluous emoluments would soon have overthrown the authority he derived from conferring, rather than receiving favours; and hence he never soared to any higher post. He was generally considered to be disinterested. How far his private fortunes benefited by his station has never appeared; nor is it known, whether by the elevation of his friend and patron to the ministry in the time of Louis XVI., he gained anything beyond the gratification of vanity, from having been the cause: it is probable he did not, for if he had, from the general odium against that promotion, no doubt it would have been exposed, unless the influence of the Queen was his protection, as it proved in so many cases where he grossly erred. From the first he was an evil to Maria Antoinette; and ultimately habit rendered him a necessary evil.[1]

1 Upon these points more will be said hereafter.

"The education of the Dauphiness was circumscribed; though very free in her manners, she was very deficient in other respects; and hence it was she so much avoided all society of females who were better informed than herself, courting in preference the lively tittle-tattle of the other sex, who were in turn, better pleased with the gaieties of youth and beauty than the more substantial logical witticisms of antiquated Court-dowagers. To this may be ascribed her ungovernable passion for great societies, balls, masquerades, and all kinds of public and private amusements, as well as her subsequent attachment to the Duchess de Polignac, who so much encouraged them for the pastime of her friend and sovereign. Though naturally averse to everything requiring study or application, Maria Antoinette was very assiduous in preparing herself for the parts she performed in the various comedies, farces, and cantatas given at her private theatre; and their acquirement seemed to cost her no trouble. These innocent diversions became a source of calumny against her; yet they formed almost the only part of her German education, about which Maria

Theresa had been particular: the Empress-mother deemed them so valuable to her children that she ordered the celebrated Metastasio to write some of his most sublime *cantatas* for the evening recreations of her sisters and herself. And what can more conduce to elegant literary knowledge, or be less dangerous to the morals of the young, than domestic recitation of the finest flights of the intellect? Certain it is that Maria Antoinette never forgot her idolatry of her master Metastasio; and it would have been well for her had all concerned in her education done her equal justice. The Abbé Vermond encouraged these studies; and the King himself afterwards sanctioned the translation of the works of his Queen's revered instructor, and their publication at her own expense, in a superb edition, that she might gratify her fondness the more conveniently by reciting them in French.[1] When

1 Happy, thrice happy, had it been for Maria Antoinette, happy for France, happy, perhaps, for all Europe, had this taste never been thwarted. The mind, once firmly occupied in any particular pursuit, is guarded against the danger arising from volatility and ennui. The mind, in want of an object of occupation congenial to its youth and tendencies,

Maria Antoinette herself became a mother, and oppressed from the change of circumstances, she regretted much that she had not in early life cultivated her mind more extensively. 'What a resource,' would she exclaim, 'is a mind well stored against human casualties!' She determined to avoid in her own offspring the error, of which she felt herself the victim, committed by her Imperial mother, for whose fault, though she suffered, she would invent excuses. 'The Empress,' she would say, 'was left a young widow with ten or twelve children; she had been accustomed, even during the Emperor's life, to head her vast empire, and she thought it would be unjust to sacrifice to her own children the welfare of the numerous family which afterwards devolved upon her exclusive government and protection.'

"Most unfortunately for Maria Antoinette,[1] her great supporter, Madame de Pompadour, died before the Arch-duchess came to France. The pilot who was to steer the young mariner

often rushes unconsciously into errors, fatal to its peace, its reputation, and its existence.

1 And perhaps for all Europe, if we may judge from the result.

safe into port, was no more, when she arrived at it. The Austrian interest had sunk with its patroness. The intriguers of the Court no sooner saw the King without an avowed favourite than they sought to give him one who should further their own views and crush the Choiseul party, which had been sustained by Pompadour. The licentious Duke de Richelieu was the pander on this occasion. The low, vulgar Du Barry was by him introduced to the King, and Richelieu had the honour of enthroning a successor to Pompadour, and supplying Louis XV. with the last of his mistresses. Madame de Grammont, who had been the royal confidante during the interregnum, gave up to the rising star. The effect of a new power was presently seen in new events. All the ministers known to be attached to the Austrian interest were dismissed; and the time for the arrival of the young bride, the Arch-duchess of Austria, who was about to be installed Dauphiness of France, was at hand, and she came to meet scarcely a friend, and many foes:—of which even her beauty, her gentleness, and her simplicity, were doomed to swell the phalanx."

NOTE.

The preceding pages of the Princess Lamballe excite reflections, which, as editor, I cannot suffer to pass without a commentary of my own. My reflections are grounded upon what I know to have been in some degree the apprehensions of Her Highness; but she did not live to see the fearful prophecies accomplished. I have often heard her utter many of the following sentiments, of which I may be deemed in part, therefore, only the transcriber; and the awful result has been a thorough illustration of the precision with which she judged. Some of my observations, it will be apparent, she could not have uttered; but I have every reason to believe that she foresaw, as distinctly as mortal vision can look into futurity, those parts of what I am about to state, which, though her thoughts dwelt upon, her discretion would not let her name. It is this which gives to her unwavering devotedness to the Queen, amid a consciousness of the inevitable *dénouement*, all the grace of martyrdom.

Maria Theresa was greatly deceived in the speculations she had formed in her private cabinet at Vienna upon her daughter's marriage, and the influence she hoped to gain from that event over the cabinet of

France. To imagine for a moment that she acted from any view to her daughter's happiness or aggrandisement would be absurd. Her real views were built on error. The hostile feeling against Austria was too strong in France to be overcome by State policy, and she was only preparing a scaffold for her child where she meditated a triumph for herself. She sacrificed everything to her ambition, and in her ambition she was punished. Had Maria Theresa been less cruel after the battle of Prague perhaps the French nation would have been kinder to her child. There may be no rule without an exception; but there is one inculcated by the mystery of religion, instituted by the word of the Supreme Himself, by that primitive food wherewith our intellects are nourished, by that school and guide of our infancy, by that conductor of our youth, by that pilot which steers us with rectitude into the harbour of maturity—that Holy Book declares without reserve, *Do as you would be done by, or you shall be visited to the third and fourth generation!* How scrupulously just, then, ought the head of a family to be in dealing with others! Not but I conceive it the duty of every individual to act righteously; but of parents it is a *special* duty. And if more awful the responsibiltiy upon parents, how tremendous must it be upon rulers! Look at the example Maria Theresa set her children! What lessons has she given them as a mother? What as a monarch? The violent usurpation of Mantua from

the princely family of the Gonzagas and the partition of Poland form the answer. But there is a madness in power which prevails even over nature, and often over interest itself, when it seeks the attainment of any specific end. Silesia, in the consideration of Maria Theresa, outweighed all others. Of the same stamp was the headlong pertinacity of Louis XIV. He waged war against almost all Europe to destroy the Austrian influence in Spain, and with his own to place Philip V. his grandson on the throne of Iberia. From State policy he as readily agreed to subsidise Great Britain, in order to tear asunder the very crown, which he himself had cemented with the blood and treasures of his subjects; and tried his utmost to hurl from the throne a prince seated on it, at the risk of losing his own! It was for political intrigue Maria Antoinette was sent to France—or rather, a family compact, under which title the true purpose is disguised in royal marriages, and by political intrigue she fell into snares fatal to her peace.

CHAPTER II

EDITOR'S REMARKS ON ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS OF MADAME CAMPAN—*JOURNAL RESUMED*—DAUPHIN ON HIS WEDDING-NIGHT AND THE NEXT MORNING — COURT INTRIGUES BEGIN—DAUGHTERS OF LOUIS XV.—THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE DAUPHIN AND DISLIKE OF HIS YOUNG BRIDE — MARIA ANTOINETTE'S DISTASTE FOR ETIQUETTE AND LOVE OF SIMPLICITY—COURT TASTE FOR HOOP-DRESSES ACCOUNTED FOR — MADAME DE NOAILLES—HER HORROR AT NOT HAVING BEEN SUMMONED ON AN OCCASION OF DELICACY — DUKE DE VAUGUYON TAKES A DISLIKE TO MARIA ANTOINETTE—CABAL BETWEEN VERMOND AND MADAME MARSAN—DU BARRY JEALOUS OF THE DAUPHINESS — RICHELIEU — THREE LADIES LEAVE THE SUPPER-TABLE OF LOUIS XV. FROM DU BARRY BEING THERE — REMONSTRANCE OF THE DAUPHINESS TO HER MOTHER ON BEING MADE TO SUP WITH DU BARRY — ANSWER — COUNT D'ARTOIS AND MONSIEUR RETURN FROM TRAVELLING — ARE CHARMED WITH MARIA ANTOINETTE — SCANDAL RESPECTING D'ARTOIS AND THE DAUPHINESS — CHANGES WROUGHT BY COURT MARRIAGES — REMONSTRANCE OF MARIA THERESA TO THE FRENCH COURT—DUCHESS DE GRAMMONT — LOUIS XV. INTRIGUES TO DIVORCE THE DAUPHIN AND MARRY THE DAUPHINESS — DIAMOND NECKLACE FIRST ORDERED BY LOUIS XV. AS A PRESENT TO HIS HOPED-FOR BRIDE — DAUPHIN COMPLAINS OF THE DISTANCE OF HIS APARTMENT FROM THAT OF HIS WIFE — ALL PARTIES INTRIGUE TO GET MARIA ANTOINETTE SENT BACK TO AUSTRIA

BEFORE I return to the Journal of the Princess Lamballe, as it falls into the regular

chronological arrangement, let me give a passing moment to the more recent biographer of Maria Antoinette, Madame Campan. Her description of the first appearance of Her Majesty at Kehl, where the change took place from the Austrian wardrobe to the French, according to the prescribed etiquette on those occasions, is so strikingly characteristic of that unfortunate Princess that I cannot avoid referring to it, though I much doubt the authenticity of some of its details. The reader, however, will see a glimmer of the bewitching simplicity of its subject through all the errors of the narrative; whence it will be evident how inestimable a gem this Princess would have proved had she been left in her rough German artlessness.

In page 45, chapter 3, Madame Campan says:—"*When the Dauphiness had been entirely undressed, even to her body linen and stockings, in order that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign Court, the doors were opened*":—mark, in a state no less than that of the Lady Godiva,—"*the young Princess came forward,*"—not even *en chemise* —as the horse jockeys do at Newmarket, I suppose, in order to be weighed before they mount the

steed! But let us go on,—"*came forward*,"—coolly, she should have said,—"*looking round for the Countess de Noailles.*"

Now among Hottentots, or some of those Egyptian females[1] who conceive the face to be the most sacred part of the human frame, and who, when surprised drawing water at the well or fountain to fill their jars do, in order to prevent the men from seeing them, actually throw up their clothing, even to the body-linen, to hide their faces! Among these I say such an exhibition might be possible; but that an Austrian Princess should, like a maniac, have been thus exposed to the contemplation of some forty or fifty idle gazers!—can such a thing be credited?

"*Then*,"—continues Madame Campan—"*rushing into her arms*,"—which I daresay she did, if

1 General Menou, when Governor of Venice, told me among other circumstances that the great hatred of the Egyptians against the French arose from their having violated many Egyptian females on the exhibition of what other nations generally conceal, and several innocent and respectable persons were thus sacrificed to the brutality of the soldiers. He said he could not pronounce whether the custom was universal, but in some villages he had witnessed it himself.

it was cold,—"*she implored her*"—"implored!" a word that is very seldom in the mouth of princesses, and much less in that of the high-mettled race of an Austrian arch-duchess like Maria Antoinette. —But once more to the text:—"*implored her, with tears in her eyes, and with a heartfelt sincerity, to direct her, to advise her, and to be, in every respect, her future guide and support!*"

Upon this, Madame Campan observes, "*It was impossible to refrain from admiring her aërial deportment; her smile was sufficient to win the heart; and in this enchanting being the splendour of French gaiety shone forth!*"

I have often heard splendour and dignity coupled together, but I do not remember the union of gaiety and splendour. No doubt it is correct, however, as a French woman, who has been the instructress of princesses, has written it.

To proceed with Madame Campan:—"*An indescribable but august serenity, perhaps also the somewhat proud position of her head and shoulders, betrayed the daughter of the Cæsars.*"

However, the word "betrayed" is here misapplied (and I myself should have used *pourtrayed*,

unfolded, or *demonstrated*, which I think, with all due submission to the compiler or composer of Madame Campan's work, would have been more appropriate than the word "betrayed"), the remark is thoroughly correct. Such were indeed the head and shoulders of Maria Antoinette. Their beauty was the envy of the one sex, and the source of much abominable detraction in those who might not approach it of the other.

There are no doubt many inconveniences inseparable from the etiquette of royal marriages, and many more which spring from chance. I have read somewhere of a proxy, who came so near the bride as to prick her with his spur; which certainly was not the intention of the royal spouse. But I am much disposed to believe, comparing the forms on the marriage of Maria Antoinette with those observed with others of her husband's family at the same period, as well as with her own excessive modesty, that in this instance, as in many others, she has been misrepresented. I should rather conceive the etiquette to have been similar to that adopted when the Princess Clotilda the sister of Louis XVI. was consigned over to the

Piedmontese ladies of the Court of Turin. A large wardrobe of different dresses of every kind met her at the last frontier town of France. There she put on the clothes provided for the purpose, returning those she brought to the persons who saw her out of France. No public dressing or undressing was thought of; and she was by far too fat to run, *in puris naturalibus*, into the arms of any lady of honour who might not be of the most uncourtly dimensions. Such, also, was the mode pursued when Madame and her sister the Countess D'Artois, both Princesses of Piedmont, were married to the two brothers of Louis XVI. No indelicate display like that which Madame Campan describes as having taken place under the Countess de Noailles was exacted from either of the brides. And why should such an exception have been made in the case of the young Austrian? Indeed (and I speak here from the authority of my papers), so scrupulous was Maria Antoinette in her observance of modesty and decorum, that she was laughed at by the young princes and nobles, for withdrawing with her tirewoman to have her hair arranged in

private; because her toilette being the usual morning rendezvous of all belonging to the Court, she could not reconcile it to her feelings, to follow the precedent of all former dauphinesses and queens, by allowing even this slight ceremony to be performed about her person, *pro bono publico*. Is it at all likely, then, that she could have consented under any circumstances to the exposure Madame Campan has described? But enough of this: I resume my editorial functions, and return to the more agreeable narrative of the Princess of Lamballe.

"On the marriage night, Louis XV. said gaily to the Dauphin who was supping with his usual heartiness, — 'Don't overcharge your stomach to-night.'

"'Why, I always sleep best after a hearty supper,' replied the Dauphin, with the greatest coolness.

"The supper being ended, he accompanied his Dauphiness to her chamber, and at the door, with the greatest politeness, wished her a good

night. Next morning, upon his saying, when he met her at breakfast, that he hoped she had slept well, Maria Antoinette replied, 'Excellently well, for I had no one to disturb me!'

"The Princess de Guèmenèe, who was then at the head of the household, on hearing the Dauphiness moving very early in her apartment, ventured to enter it, and not seeing the Dauphin, exclaimed, 'Bless me! he is risen as usual!' 'Whom do you mean?' asked Maria Antoinette. The Princess misconstruing the interrogation, was going to retire, when the Dauphiness said, 'I have heard a great deal of French politeness, but I think I am married to the most polite of the nation!' 'What, then, he *is* risen?' 'No, no, no!' exclaimed the Dauphiness, 'there has been no rising; he has never lain down here. He left me at the door of my apartment with his hat in his hand, and hastened from me as if embarrassed with my person!'

"After Maria Antoinette became a mother she would often laugh and tell Louis XVI. of his bridal politeness, and ask him if in the interim between that and the consummation he had

studied his maiden aunts or his tutor on the subject. On this he would laugh most excessively.

"Scarcely was Maria Antoinette seated in her new country before the virulence of Court intrigue against her became active. She was beset on all sides by enemies open and concealed, who never slackened their persecutions. All the family of Louis XV. consisting of those maiden aunts of the Dauphin just adverted to (among whom Madame Adelaide was specially implacable) were incensed at the marriage, not only from their hatred to Austria, but because it had accomplished the ambition of an obnoxious favourite to give a wife to the Dauphin of their kingdom. On the credulous and timid mind of the Prince, then in the leading strings of this pious sisterhood, they impressed the misfortunes to his country and to the interest of the Bourbon family, which must spring from the Austrian influence through the medium of his bride. No means were left unessayed to steel him against her sway. I remember once to have heard her Majesty remark to Louis XVI. in answer to some particular observations he made, 'These, sire, are the sentiments of our aunts, I

am sure.' And indeed great must have been their ascendancy over him in youth, for up to a late date he entertained a very high respect for their capacity and judgment. Great indeed must it have been to have prevailed against all the seducing allurements of a beautiful and fascinating young bride, whose amiableness, vivacity, and wit became the universal admiration, and whose graceful manner of address few ever equalled and none ever surpassed; nay, even *so* to have prevailed as to form one of the great sources of his aversion to consummate the marriage! Since the death of the late Queen, their mother, these four Princesses (who, it was said, if old *maids*, were not so from choice) had received and performed the exclusive honours of the Court. It could not have diminished their dislike for the young and lovely new-comer to see themselves under the necessity of abandoning their dignities and giving up their station. So eager were they to contrive themes of complaint against her, that when she visited them in the simple attire in which she so much delighted, *sans cérémonie*, unaccompanied by a troop of horse and a squadron of foot-

guards, they complained to their father, who hinted to Maria Antoinette that such a relaxation of the royal dignity would be attended with considerable injury to French manufactures, to trade, and to the respect due to her rank. 'My State and Court dresses,' replied she, 'shall not be less brilliant than those of any former Dauphiness or Queen of France, if such be the pleasure of the King,—but to my grand-papa I appeal for some indulgence with respect to my undress private costume of the morning.[1]'

"It was dangerous for one in whose conduct so many prying eyes were seeking for sources of accusation to gratify herself even by the overthrow of an absurdity, when that overthrow might incur the stigma of innovation. The Court of Versailles was jealous of its Spanish inquisitorial etiquette. It had been strictly wedded to its pageantries since the time of the great Anne of Austria. The sagacious and prudent provisions of this illustrious contriver were deemed the *ne plus ultra* of royal

1 Trifling, however, as Maria Antoinette deemed these cavils about dress and etiquette, they contained the elements of her future fall.

female policy. A cargo of whalebone was yearly obtained by her to construct such stays for the maids of honour as might adequately conceal the Court accidents which generally—poor ladies!—befell them in rotation every nine months.

"But Maria Antoinette could not sacrifice her predilection for a simplicity quite English, to prudential considerations. Indeed she was too young to conceive it even desirable. So much did she delight in being unshackled by finery that she would hurry from Court to fling off her royal robes and ornaments, exclaiming, when freed from them, 'Thank Heaven, I am out of harness!'

"But she had natural advantages, which gave her enemies a pretext for ascribing this antipathy to the established fashion to mere vanity. It is not impossible that she might have derived some pleasure from displaying a figure so beautiful, with no adornment except its native gracefulness; but how great must have been the chagrin of the Princesses, of many of the Court ladies, indeed of all in any way ungainly or deformed, when called to exhibit themselves by the side of

a bewitching person like hers, unaided by the whalebone and horse-hair paddings with which they had hitherto been made up, and which placed the best form on a level with the worst? The prudes who practised illicitly, and felt the convenience of a guise which so well concealed the effect of their frailties, were neither the least formidable nor the least numerous of the enemies created by this revolution of costume; and the Dauphiness was voted by common consent—for what greater crime could there be in France? —the heretic Martin Luther of female fashions! The four Princesses, her aunts, were as bitter against the disrespect with which the Dauphiness treated the armour, which they called dress, as if they themselves had benefited by the immunities it could confer.

"Indeed, most of the old Court ladies embattled themselves against Maria Antoinette's encroachments upon their *habits*. The leader of them was a real medallion, whose costume, character and notions, spoke a genealogy perfectly antediluvian; who even to the latter days of Louis XV., amid a Court so irregular, persisted

in her precision. So systematic a supporter of the antique could be no other than the declared foe of any change, and, of course. deemed the desertion of large sack gowns, monstrous Court hoops, and the old notions of appendages attached to them, for tight waists and short petticoats, an awful demonstration of the depravity of the time [1] !

"This lady had been first lady to the sole Queen of Louis XV. She was retained in the same station for Maria Antoinette. Her motions were regulated like clock-work. So methodical was she in all her operations of mind and body, that, from the beginning of the year to its end, she never deviated a moment. Every hour had its peculiar occupation. Her element was etiquette, but the etiquette of ages before the flood. She had her rules even for the width of petticoats that the Queens and Princesses might have no temptation to straddle over a rivulet, or crossing, of unroyal size.

"The Queen of Louis XV. having been totally subservient in her movements night and day to

1 The editor needs scarcely add, that the allusion of the princess is to Madame de Noailles.

the wishes of the Countess de Noailles, it will be readily conceived, how great a shock this lady must have sustained on being informed one morning, that the Dauphiness had actually risen in the night, and her ladyship not by to witness a ceremony from which most ladies would have felt no little pleasure in being spared, but which, on this occasion, admitted of no delay! Notwithstanding the Dauphiness excused herself by the assurance of the urgency allowing no time to call the Countess, she nearly fainted at not having been present at that, which others sometimes faint at, if too near!—This unaccustomed watchfulness so annoyed Maria Antoinette, that, determined to laugh her out of it, she ordered an immense bottle of hartshorn to be placed upon her toilette. Being asked what use was to be made of the hartshorn, she said it was to prevent her first lady of honour from falling into hysterics when the calls of nature were uncivil enough to exclude her from being of the party. This, as may be presumed, had its desired effect, and Maria Antoinette was ever afterwards allowed free access at least to one of her apartments, and leave to perform that in

private which few individuals except Princesses do with parade and publicity.

"These things, however, planted the seeds of rancour against Maria Antoinette, which Madame de Noailles carried with her to the grave. It will be seen that she declared against her at a crisis of great importance. The laughable title of Madame Etiquette, which the Dauphiness gave her, clung to her through life; and, though conferred only in merriment, it never was forgiven.

"The Dauphiness seemed to be under a sort of fatality with regard to all those who had any power of doing her mischief either with her husband or the Court. The Duke de Vauguyon, the Dauphin's tutor, who both from principle and interest hated everything Austrian and anything whatever which threatened to lessen his despotic influence so long exercised over the mind of his pupil, which he foresaw would be endangered were the Prince once out of his leading-strings and swayed by a young wife, made use of all the influence which old courtiers can command over the minds they have formed (more generally for their own ends than those of uprightness) to,

poison that of the young Prince against his bride.

"Never were there more intrigues among the female slaves in the Seraglio of Constantinople for the Grand Signior's handkerchief than were continually harassing one party against the other at the Court of Versailles. The Dauphiness was even attacked through her own tutor, the Abbé Vermond. A cabal was got up between the Abbé and Madame Marsan, instructress of the sisters of Louis XVI. (the Princesses Clotilda and Elizabeth) upon the subject of education. Nothing grew out of this affair excepting a new stimulus to the party spirit against the Austrian influence, or, in other words, the Austrian Princess; and such was probably its purpose. Of course every trifle becomes Court tattle. This was made a mighty business of, for want of a worse. The royal aunts naturally took the part of Madame Marsan. They maintained that their royal nieces, the French Princesses, were much better educated than the German Arch-duchesses had been by the Austrian Empress. They attempted to found their assertion upon the *embonpoint* of the French Princesses. They said that their nieces, by the exercise of

religious principles, obtained the advantage of solid flesh, while the Austrian Arch-duchesses, by wasting themselves in idleness and profane pursuits, grew thin and meagre, and were equally exhausted in their minds and bodies!—At this the Abbé Vermond, as the tutor of Maria Antoinette, felt himself highly offended, and called on Count de Mercy, then the Imperial Ambassador, to apprize him of the insult the Empire had received over the shoulders of the Dauphiness's tutor. The Ambassador gravely replied that he should certainly send off a courier immediately to Vienna to inform the Empress that the only fault the French Court could find with Maria Antoinette was her being not so unwieldy as their own Princesses, and bringing charms with her to a bridegroom, on whom even charms so transcendent could make no impression!—Thus the matter was laughed off, but it left, ridiculous as it was, new bitter enemies to the cause of the illustrious stranger.

"The new favourite, Madame du Barry, whose sway was now supreme, was of course joined by the whole vitiated intriguing Court of Versailles.—The King's favourite is always that

of his parasites, however degraded. The politics of the Pompadour party were still feared, though Pompadour herself was no more, for Choiseul had friends who were still active in his behalf. The power which had been raised to crush the power that was still struggling, formed a rallying point for those who hated Austria, which the deposed ministry had supported; and even the King's daughters, much as they abhorred the vulgarity of Du Barry, were led, by dislike for the Dauphiness, to pay their devotions to their father's mistress. The influence of the rising sun, Maria Antoinette, whose beauteous rays of blooming youth warmed every heart in her favour, was feared by the new favourite as well as by the old maidens. Louis XV. had already expressed a sufficient interest for the friendless royal stranger to awaken the jealousy of Du Barry, and she was as little disposed to share the King's affections with another, as his daughters were to welcome a future Queen from Austria in their palace. Mortified at the attachment the King daily evinced, she strained every nerve to raise a party to destroy his predilections. She called to her aid the strength of ridicule, than which no

weapon is more false or deadly. She laughed at qualities she could not comprehend, and underrated what she could not imitate. The Duke de Richelieu, who had been instrumental to her good fortune, and for whom (remembering the old adage: *when one hand washes the other both are made clean*), she procured the command of the army—this duke, the triumphant general of Mahon and one of the most distinguished noblemen of France, did not blush to become the secret agent of a depraved meretrix in the conspiracy to blacken the character of her victim! The Princesses, of course, joined the jealous Phryne against their niece, the daughter of the Cæsars, whose only faults were those of nature, for at that time she *could* have no other excepting those personal perfections—which were the main source of all their malice. By one considered as an usurper, by the others as an intruder, both were in consequence industrious in the quiet work of ruin by whispers and detraction.

"To an impolitic act of the Dauphiness herself may be in part ascribed the unwonted virulence of the jealousy and resentment of Du Barry. The old dotard, Louis XV., was so indelicate as to have

her present at the first supper of the Dauphiness at Versailles. Madame la Mareschale de Beaumond, the Duchess de Choiseul, and the Duchess de Grammont were there also; but upon the favourite taking her seat at table they expressed themselves very freely to Louis XV. respecting the insult they conceived offered to the young Dauphiness, left the royal party, and never appeared again at Court till after the King's death. In consequence of this scene, Maria Antoinette, at the instigation of the Abbé Vermond, wrote to her mother, the Empress, complaining of the slight put upon her rank, birth, and dignity, and requesting the Empress would signify her displeasure to the Court of France as she had done to that of Spain on a similar occasion in favour of her sister the Queen of Naples.

"This letter, which was intercepted, got to the knowledge of the Court and excited some clamour. To say the worst, it could only be looked upon as an ebullition of the folly of youth. But insignificant as such matters were in fact, malignity converted them into the locust, which destroyed the fruit she was sent to cultivate.

"Maria Theresa, like the old fox, too true to her system to retract the policy, which formerly laid her open to the criticism of all the civilised Courts of Europe for opening the correspondence with Pompadour, to whose influence she owed her daughter's footing in France—a correspondence whereby she degraded the dignity of her sex and the honour of her crown—and at the same time suspecting that it was not her daughter, but Vermond, from private motives, who complained, wrote the following laconic reply to the remonstrance:—

"'Where the sovereign himself presides, no guest can be exceptionable."

"Such sentiments are very much in contradiction with the character of Maria Theresa. She was always solicitous to impress the world with her high notion of moral rectitude. Certainly, such advice, however politic, ought not to have proceeded from a mother so religious as Maria Theresa wished herself to be thought; especially to a young Princess who, though enthusiastically fond of admiration, at least had discretion to see and feel the impropriety of her being degraded to the level of a female like Du Barry, and, withal,

courage to avow it. This, of itself, was quite enough to shake the virtue of Maria Antoinette; or, at least, Maria Theresa's letter was of a cast to make her callous to the observance of all its scruples. And in that vitiated, depraved Court, she too soon, unfortunately, took the hint of her maternal counsellor in not only tolerating, but imitating, the object she despised. Being one day told that Du Barry was the person who most contributed to amuse Louis XV.—'Then,' said she, innocently, 'I declare myself her rival; for I will try who can best amuse my grandpapa for the future. I will exert all my powers to please and divert him, and then we shall see who can best succeed.'

"Du Barry was by when this was said, and she never forgave it. To this, and to the letter, her rancour may principally be ascribed. To all those of the Court party who owed their places and preferments to her exclusive influence and who held them subject to her caprice, she, of course, communicated the venom.

"Meanwhile, the Dauphin saw Maria Antoinette mimicking the monkey tricks with which this low

Sultana amused her dotard, without being aware of the cause. He was not pleased; and this circumstance, coupled with his natural coolness and indifference for an union he had been taught to deem impolitic and dangerous to the interests of France, created in his virtuous mind that sort of disgust which remained so long an enigma to the Court and all the kingdom, excepting his royal aunts, who did the best they could to confirm it into so decided an aversion as might induce him to impel his grandfather to annul the marriage and send the Dauphiness back to Vienna."

The execution of this diabolical scheme, with many others of a similar nature, was only prevented by the death of Louis XV. They are not treated by the Princess here, but will be found explained by her in their proper place. She seems to feel as if she had already outrun her story, and therefore returns a little upon her steps. The manuscript continues thus:

"After the Dauphin's marriage, the Count

d'Artois and his brother Monsieur[1] returned from their travels to Versailles. The former was delighted with the young Dauphiness, and, seeing her so decidedly neglected by her husband, endeavoured to console her by a marked attention, but for which she would have been totally isolated, for, excepting the old King, who became more and more enraptured with the grace, beauty, and vivacity of his young grand-daughter, not another individual in the royal family was really interested in her favour. The kindness of a personage so important was of too much weight not to awaken calumny. It was, of course, endeavoured to be turned against her. Possibilities, and even probabilities, conspired to give a pretext for the scandal which already began to be whispered about the Dauphiness and d'Artois. It would have been no wonder had a reciprocal attachment arisen between a virgin wife, so long neglected by her husband, and one whose congeniality of character pointed him out as a more desirable partner than the Dauphin. But

1 Afterwards Louis XVIII., and the former the present Charles X.

there is abundant evidence of the perfect innocence of their intercourse. Du Barry was most earnest in endeavouring, from first to last, to establish its impurity, because the Dauphiness induced the gay young Prince to join in all her girlish schemes to tease and circumvent the favourite. But when this young Prince and his brother were married to the two Princesses of Piedmont, the intimacy between their brides and the Dauphiness proved there could have been no doubt that Du Barry had invented a calumny, and that no feeling existed but one altogether sisterly. The three stranger Princesses were indeed inseparable; and these marriages, with that of the French Princess, Clotilda, to the Prince of Piedmont, created considerable changes in the coteries of Court.

"The machinations against Maria Antoinette could not be concealed from the Empress-mother. An extraordinary ambassador was consequently sent from Vienna to complain of them to the Court of Versailles, with directions that the remonstrance should be supported and backed by the Count de Mercy, then Austrian ambassador at the Court of France. Louis XV. was the only

person to whom the communication was news. This old *dilettanti* of the sex was so much engaged between his seraglio of the *Parc aux cerfs* and Du Barry, that he knew less of what was passing in his palace than those at Constantinople. On being informed by the Austrian ambassador, he sent an ambassador of his own to Vienna to assure the Empress that he was perfectly satisfied of the innocent conduct of his newly acquired granddaughter.

"Among the intrigues within intrigues of the time I mention, there was one which shows that perhaps Du Barry's distrust of the constancy of her paramour, and apprehension from the effect on him of the charms of the Dauphiness, in whom he became daily more interested, were not utterly without foundation. In this instance even her friend the Duke de Richelieu, that notorious seducer, by lending himself to the secret purposes of the King, became a traitor to the cause of the King's favourite, to which he had sworn allegiance, and which he had supported by defaming her whom he now became anxious to make his Queen.

"It has already been said, that the famous

Duchess de Grammont was one of the confidential friends of Louis XV. before he took Du Barry under his especial protection. Of course, there can be no difficulty in conceiving how likely a person she would be, to aid any purpose of the King, which should displace the favourite, by whom she herself had been obliged to retire, by ties of a higher order, to which she might prove instrumental.

"Louis XV. actually flattered himself with the hope of obtaining advantages from the Dauphin's coolness towards the Dauphiness. He encouraged it, and even threw many obstacles in the way of the consummation of the marriage. The apartments of the young couple were placed at opposite ends of the palace, so that the Dauphin could not approach that of his Dauphiness without a publicity, which his bashfulness could not brook.

"Louis XV now began to act upon his secret passion to supplant his grandson, and make the Dauphiness his own Queen, by endeavouring to secure her affections to himself. His attentions were backed by gifts of diamonds, pearls, and other valuables, and it was at this period that Bœhmer,

the jeweller, first received the order for that famous necklace, which subsequently produced such dreadful consequences, and which was originally meant as a kingly present to the intended Queen; though afterwards destined for Du Barry, had not the King died before the completion of the bargain for it.

"The Queen herself one day told me, 'Heaven knows if ever I should have had the blessing of being a mother, had I not one evening surprised the Dauphin, when the subject was adverted to, in the expression of a sort of regret at our being placed so far asunder from each other. Indeed he never honoured me with any proof of his affection so explicit as that you have just witnessed' —for the King had that moment kissed her, as he left the apartment—'from the time of our marriage till the consummation. The most I ever received from him was a squeeze of the hand in secret. His extreme modesty, and perhaps his utter ignorance of the intercourse with woman, dreaded the exposure of crossing the palace to my bed-chamber; and no doubt the accomplishment would have occurred sooner, could it have been effectuated in privacy. The hint he

gave emboldened me with courage, when he next left me, as usual, at the door of my apartment, to mention it to the Duchess of Grammont, then the confidential friend of Louis XV., who laughed me almost out of countenance; saying, in her gay manner of expressing herself, '*If* I were as young and as beautiful a wife as you are I should certainly not trouble myself to remove the obstacle by going to him while there were others of superior rank ready to supply his place.' Before she quitted me, however, she said: 'Well, child, make yourself easy: you shall no longer be separated from the object of your wishes: I will mention it to the King, your grandpapa, and he will soon order your husband's apartment to be changed for one nearer your own.' And the change shortly afterwards took place.[1]

1 The Dauphiness could not understand the first allusion of the Duchess; but it is evident that the vile intriguer took this opportunity of sounding her upon what she was commissioned to carry on in favour of Louis XV. and it is equally apparent that when she heard Maria Antoinette express herself decidedly in favour of her young husband, and distinctly saw how utterly groundless were the hopes of his secret rival, she was led thereby to abandon her wicked project; and perhaps the change of apartments was the best mask that could have been devised to hide the villainy.

"'Here,' continued the Queen, 'I accuse myself of a want of that courage which every virtuous wife ought to exercise in not having complained of the visible neglect shown me long, long before I did; for this, perhaps, would have spared both of us the many bitter pangs originating in the seeming coldness, whence have arisen all the scandalous stories against my character—which have often interrupted the full enjoyment I should have felt, had they not made me tremble for the security of that attachment, of which I had so many proofs, and which formed my only consolation amid all the malice, that for years has been endeavouring to deprive me of it! So far as regards my husband's estimation, thank fate, I have defied their wickedness! Would to Heaven I could have been equally secure in the estimation of my people—the object nearest to my heart, after the King and my dear children!'

"The present period appears to have been one of the happiest of the life of Maria Antoinette. Her intimate society consisted of the King's brothers, and their Princesses, with the King's saint-like sister Elizabeth; and they lived entirely

together, excepting when the Dauphiness dined in public. These ties seemed to be drawn daily closer for some time, till the subsequent intimacy with the Polignacs. Even when the Countess d'Artois lay-in, the Dauphiness, then become Queen, transferred her parties to the apartments of that Princess, rather than lose the gratification of her society.

"During all this time, however, Du Barry, the Duke d'Aiguillon, and the aunts-Princesses, took special care to keep themselves between her and any tenderness on the part of the husband Dauphin, and, from different motives uniting in one end, tried every means to get the object of their hatred sent back to Vienna."

CHAPTER III

JOURNAL CONTINUED — MARIA THERESA — CARDINAL DE ROHAN—EMPRESS INDUCED BY HIM TO SEND SPIES TO FRANCE—MARIA ANTOINETTE DISLIKES MEDDLING WITH POLITICS—DEEP GAME OF DE ROHAN—SPIES SENT TO FRANCE, UNKNOWN TO THE CARDINAL, TO DISCOVER HOW FAR HIS REPRESENTATIONS ARE TO BE TRUSTED—SHE FINDS HE HAS DECEIVED HER, AND RESENTS IT — HE FALLS IN LOVE WITH MARIA ANTOINETTE—BETRAYS HER TO HER MOTHER—INDIGNATION OF MARIA ANTOINETTE ON THE OCCASION—HE SUGGESTS THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA ANTOINETTE'S SISTER WITH LOUIS XV. — HIS DOUBLE INTRIGUES WITH THE TWO COURTS OF FRANCE AND AUSTRIA—LOUIS XV. DIES—ROHAN DISGRACED

"THE Empress-mother was thoroughly aware of all that was going on. Her anxiety, not only about her daughter, but her State policy, which it may be apprehended was in her mind the stronger motive of the two, encouraged the machinations of an individual who must now appear upon the stage of action, and to whose arts may be ascribed the worst of the sufferings of Maria Antoinette.

"I allude to the Cardinal Prince de Rohan.

"At this time he was Ambassador at the Court of Vienna. The reliance the Empress placed on him[1] favoured his criminal machinations against her daughter's reputation. He was the cause of her sending spies to watch the conduct of the Dauphiness, besides a list of persons proper for her to cultivate, as well as of those it was deemed desirable for her to exclude from her confidence.

"As the Empress knew all those who, though high in office in Versailles, secretly received pensions from Vienna, she could, of course, tell without much expense of sagacity, who were in the Austrian interest. The Dauphiness was warned that she was surrounded by persons who were not her friends.

"The conduct of Maria Theresa towards her daughter the Queen of Naples[2] will sufficiently explain how much the Empress must have been

1 Madame Campan (vol. i. page 42) is very much in the dark on this subject and totally misinformed. The Cardinal de Rohan did not become obnoxious to Maria Theresa till it was discovered that he had abused her confidence and betrayed that of her ministers.—*Ed.*

2 See page 28.

chagrined at the absolute indifference of Maria Antoinette to the State policy, which was intended to have been served in sending her to France. A less fitting instrument for the purpose could not have been selected by the mother. Maria Antoinette had much less of the politician about her than either of her surviving sisters; and so much was she addicted to amusement, that she never even thought of entering into State affairs till forced by the King's neglect of his most essential prerogatives and called upon by the ministers themselves to screen them from responsibility. Indeed, the latter cause prevailed upon her to take her seat in the cabinet council (though she took it with great reluctance) long before she was impelled thither by events and her consciousness of its necessity. She would often exclaim to me: 'How happy I was during the lifetime of Louis XV.! No cares to disturb my peaceful slumbers! No responsibility to agitate my mind! No fears of erring, of partiality, of injustice to break in upon my enjoyments! All, all happiness, my dear Princess, vanishes from the bosom of a female if she once deviate from the prescribed

domestic character of her sex! Nothing was ever framed more wise than the Salique Laws, which in France and many parts of Germany exclude females from reigning, for few of us have that masculine capacity so necessary to conduct with impartiality and justice the affairs of State!'

"To this feeling of the impropriety of feminine interference in masculine duties, coupled with her attachment to France, both from principle and feeling, may be ascribed the neglect of her German connexions, which led to the many mortifying reproaches, and the still more galling espionage to which she was subjected in her own palace by her mother. These are, however, so many proofs of the falsehood of the allegations by which she suffered so deeply afterwards, of having sacrificed the interests of her husband's kingdom to her predilection for her mother's empire.

"The subtile Rohan designed to turn the anxiety of Maria Theresa about the Dauphiness to account, and he was also aware that the ambition of the Empress was paramount in Maria Theresa's bosom to the love for her child. He was about to play a deep and more than double

game. By increasing the mother's jealousy of the daughter, and at the same time enhancing the importance of the advantages afforded by her situation, to forward the interests of the mother, he, no doubt, hoped to get both within his power: for who can tell what wild expectation might not have animated such a mind as Rohan's, at the prospect of governing not only the Court of France but that of Austria?—the Court of France, through a secret influence of his own dictation thrown around the Dauphiness by the mother's alarm; and that of Austria, through a way he pointed out, in which the object, that was most longed for by the mother's ambition, seemed most likely to be achieved! While he endeavoured to make Maria Theresa beset her daughter with the spies I have mentioned, and which were generally of his own selection, he at the same time endeavoured to strengthen her impression of how important it was to her schemes to insure the daughter's co-operation. Conscious of the eagerness of Maria Theresa for the recovery of the rich province which Frederick the Great of Prussia had wrested from her ancient dominions, he pressed

upon her credulity the assurance, that the influence, of which the Dauphiness was capable, over Louis XV. by the youthful beauty's charms acting upon the dotard's admiration, would readily induce that monarch to give such aid to Austria as must insure the restoration of what it lost. Silesia, it has been before observed, was always a topic by means of which the weak side of Maria Theresa could be attacked with success. There is generally some peculiar frailty in the ambitious, through which the artful can throw them off their guard. The weak and tyrannical Philip II. whenever the recovery of Holland and the Low Countries was proposed to him was always ready to rush headlong into any scheme for its accomplishment; the bloody Queen Mary, his wife, declared that at her death the loss of Calais would be found engraven on her heart; and to Maria Theresa, Silesia was the Holland and the Calais for which her wounded pride was thirsting.[1]

1 No doubt if ever Ferdinand of Spain can be made to believe he has lost Spanish America, he may exclaim with equal truth, "I feel it in my head, in every fibre of my racked frame—it gnaws my unrelenting heart!" However ridiculous, it is certainly true, that whenever sovereigns,

"But Maria Theresa was wary, even in the midst of the credulity of her ambition. The Baron de Neni was sent by her privately to Versailles to examine, personally, whether there was anything in Maria Antoinette's conduct requiring the extreme vigilance which had been represented as indispens-

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from their folly, ignorance, oppression, or misrule, lose a part of their States their reason generally follows, at least upon that one theme. Such is the principle which at this moment actuates the Turks for the recovery of Greece! If the Greeks are not Spaniards, and English valour do not degenerate to French poltroonry, the fatalism by which they are guided will soon convince the Turks that they are playing a losing game. The woeful experience of some of the greatest of the European politicians might afford them a useful lesson. How impolitic is the neutrality of my own country upon this interesting subject! Why is it thus reluctant to assist in tearing off the yoke of an intelligent people's barbarous oppressors, who are as uncivilised at this moment as they were centuries ago, when they first took possession of Byzantium? Ought we not to rejoice in the triumph of those whom God himself commands to propagate human emancipation? For liberty, like religion, must have its martyrs. Its blood is the stamina of its existence. Its opposers may exile, imprison, burn in effigy, and, in fact, hang and shoot; but all these violences only strengthen the creed of the survivors, and must end in the ruin of the unholy cause they would fain strengthen. Nations must be free to be prosperous, and Princes liberal to be happy. Liberty is the phœnix that revives from its ashes!—ED.

able. The report of the Baron de Neni to his royal mistress was such as to convince her she had been misled and her daughter misrepresented by Rohan. The Empress instantly forbade him her presence.

"The Cardinal upon this, unknown to the Court of Vienna, and indeed, to everyone, except his factotum, principal agent, and secretary, the Abbé Georgel, left the Austrian capital, and came to Versailles, covering his disgrace by pretended leave of absence. On seeing Maria Antoinette he fell enthusiastically in love with her. To gain her confidence he disclosed the conduct which had been observed towards her by the Empress, and, in confirmation of the correctness of his disclosure, admitted that he had himself chosen the spies, which had been set on her. Indignant at such meanness in her mother, and despising the prelate, who could be base enough to commit a deed equally corrupt and uncalled for, and even thus wantonly betrayed when committed, the Dauphiness suddenly withdrew from his presence, and gave orders that he should never be admitted to any of her parties.

"But his imagination was too much heated

by a guilty passion of the blackest hue to recede; and his nature too presumptuous and fertile in expedients to be disconcerted. He soon found means to conciliate both mother and daughter; and both by pretending to manage with the one the self-same plot, which, with the other, he was recommending himself by pretending to overthrow. To elude detection he interrupted the regular correspondence between the Empress and the Dauphiness, and created a coolness by preventing the communications which would have unmasked him, that gave additional security to the success of his deception.

"By the most diabolical arts he obtained an interview with the Dauphiness, in which he regained her confidence. He made her believe that he had been commissioned by her mother, as she had shown so little interest for the house of Austria, to settle a marriage for her sister, the Arch-duchess Elizabeth, with Louis XV. The Dauphiness was deeply affected at the statement. She could not conceal her agitation. She involuntarily confessed how much she should deplore such an alliance. The Cardinal instantly perceived

his advantage, and was too subtle to let it pass. He declared that as it was to him the negotiation had been confided, if the Dauphiness would keep her own counsel, never communicate their conversation to the Empress, but leave the whole matter to his management and only assure him that he was forgiven, he would pledge himself to arrange things to her satisfaction. The Dauphiness, not wishing to see another raised to the throne over her head and to her scorn, under the assurance that no one knew of the intention or could prevent it but the Cardinal, promised him her faith and favour; and thus rashly fell into the springe of this wily intriguer.

"Exulting to find Maria Antoinette in his power, the Cardinal left Versailles as privately as he arrived there, for Vienna. His next object was to ensnare the Empress, as he had done her daughter; and by a singular caprice fortune, during his absence, had been preparing for him the means.

"The Abbé Georgel, his secretary, by underhand manœuvres, to which he was accustomed, had obtained access to all the secret State correspondence, in which the Empress had expressed

herself fully to the Count de Mercy relative to the views of Russia and Prussia upon Poland, whereby her own plans were much thwarted. The acquirement of copies of these documents naturally gave the Cardinal free access to the Court and a ready introduction once more to the Empress. She was too much committed by his possession of such weapons, not to be most happy to make her peace with him; and he was too sagacious not to make the best use of his opportunity. To regain her confidence, he betrayed some of the subaltern agents, through whose treachery he had procured his evidences, and, in farther confirmation of his resources, showed the Empress several dispatches from her own ministers to the Courts of Russia and Prussia. He had long, he said, been in possession of similar views of aggrandisement, upon which these Courts were about to act; and had, for a while, even incurred Her Imperial Majesty's displeasure, merely because he was not in a situation fully to explain; but that he had now thought of the means to crush their schemes before they could be put in practice. He apprised her of his being aware that Her Imperial Majesty's

ministers were actively carrying on a correspondence with Russia, with a view of joining her in checking the French co-operation with the Grand Signior; and warned her that if this design were *secretly* pursued, it would defeat the very views she had in sharing in the spoliation of Poland; and if *openly*, it would be deemed an avowal of hostilities against the Court of France, whose political system would certainly impel it to resist any attack upon the divan of Constantinople, that the balance of power in Europe might be maintained against the formidable ambition of Catherine, whose gigantic hopes had been already too much realised.

"Maria Theresa was no less astonished at these disclosures of the Cardinal than the Dauphiness had been at his communication concerning her. She plainly saw that all her plans were known, and might be defeated from their detection.

"The Cardinal, having succeeded in alarming the Empress, took from his pocket a fabulous correspondence, hatched by his secretary, the Abbé Georgel. 'There, madam,' said he, 'this will convince your majesty that the warm interest

I have taken in your Imperial house has carried me farther than I was justified in having gone; but seeing the sterility of the Dauphiness, or, as it is reported by some of the Court, the total disgust the Dauphin has to consummate the marriage, the coldness of your daughter towards the interest of your Court, and the prospect of a race from the Countess d'Artois, for the consequences of which there is no answering, I have, unknown to your Imperial Majesty, taken upon myself to propose to Louis XV. a marriage with the Arch-duchess Elizabeth, who, on becoming Queen of France, will immediately have it in her power to forward the Austrian interest; for Louis XV., as the first proof of his affection to his young bride, will at once secure to your Empire the aid you stand so much in need of against the ambition of these two rising states. The recovery of your Imperial Majesty's ancient dominions may then be looked upon as accomplished from the influence of the French cabinet.

"The bait was swallowed. Maria Theresa was so overjoyed at this scheme that she totally forgot all former animosity against the Cardinal.

She was encouraged to ascribe the silence of Maria Antoinette (whose letters had been intercepted by the Cardinal himself) to her resentment of this project concerning her sister; and the deluded Empress, availing herself of the pretended zeal of the Cardinal for the interest of her family, gave him full powers to return to France and secretly negociate the alliance for her daughter Elizabeth, which was by no means to be disclosed to the Dauphiness till the King's proxy should be appointed to perform the ceremony at Vienna. This was all the Cardinal wished for.

"Meanwhile, in order to obtain a still greater ascendancy over the Court of France, he had expended immense sums to bribe secretaries and ministers; and couriers were even stopped to have copies taken of all the correspondence to and from Austria At the same crisis the Empress was informed by Prince Kaunitz that the Cardinal and his suite at the palace of the French ambassador carried on such an immense and barefaced traffic of French manufactures of every description that Maria Theresa thought proper, in order to prevent future abuse, to abolish the

privilege which gave to ministers and ambassadors an opportunity of defrauding the revenue. Though this law was levelled exclusively at the Cardinal, it was thought convenient under the circumstances to avoid irritating him, and it was consequently made general. But, the Count de Mercy now obtaining some clue to his duplicity, an intimation was given to the Court at Versailles, to which the King replied, 'If the Empress be dissatisfied with the French ambassador, he shall be recalled.' But though completely unmasked none dared publicly to accuse him, each party fearing a discovery of its own intrigue. His official recall did not in consequence take place for some time; and the Cardinal, not thinking it prudent to go back till Louis XV. should be no more, lest some unforseen discovery of his project for supplying her royal paramour with a queen should rouse Du Barry to get his Cardinalship sent to the Bastille for life, remained fixed in his post, waiting for events.

"At length Louis XV. expired, and the Cardinal returned to Versailles. He contrived to obtain a private audience of the young

Queen. He presumed upon her former facility in listening to him, and was about to betray the last confidence of Maria Theresa; but the Queen, shocked at the knowledge which she had obtained of his having been equally treacherous to her with her mother, in disgust and alarm left the room without receiving a letter he had brought her from Maria Theresa, and without deigning to address a single word to him. In the heat of her passion and resentment, she was nearly exposing all she knew of his infamies to the King, when the cool-headed Princess Elizabeth opposed her, from the seeming imprudence of such an abrupt discovery; alleging that it might cause an open rupture between the two Courts, as it had already been the source of a reserve and coolness, which had not yet been explained. The Queen was determined never more to commit herself by seeing the Cardinal. She accordingly sent for her mother's letter, which he himself delivered into the hands of her confidential messenger, who advised the Queen not to betray the Cardinal to the King, lest, in so doing, she should never be able to guard herself against the

domestic spies, by whom, perhaps, she was even yet surrounded! The Cardinal, conceiving, from the impunity of his conduct, that he still held the Queen in check, through the influence of her fears of his disclosing her weakness upon the subject of the obstruction she threw in the way of her sister's marriage, did not resign the hope of converting that ascendancy to his future profit.

"The fatal silence to which Her Majesty was thus unfortunately advised I regret from the bottom of my soul! All the successive vile plots of the Cardinal against the peace and reputation of the Queen may be attributed to this ill-judged prudence! Though it resulted from an honest desire of screening Her Majesty from the resentment or revenge to which she might have subjected herself from this villain, who had already injured her in her own estimation for having been credulous enough to have listened to him, yet from this circumstance it is that the Prince de Rohan built the foundation of all the after frauds and machinations with which he blackened the character and destroyed the comfort of his illustrious victim. It is obvious that a mere exclusion

from Court was too mild a punishment for such offences, and it was but too natural that such a mind as his, driven from the royal presence, and, of course, from all the noble societies to which it led (the anti-Court party excepted), should brood over the means of inveigling the Queen into a consent for his re-appearance before her and the gay world, which was his only element, and if her favour should prove unattainable to revenge himself by her ruin.

"On the Cardinal's return to France,[1] all his numerous and powerful friends beset the King and Queen to allow of his restoration to his embassy; but though on his arrival at Versailles, finding the Court had removed to Compeigne, he had a short audience there of the King, all efforts in his favour were thrown away. Equally unsuccessful was every intercession with the Empress-mother. She had become thoroughly awakened to his worthlessness, and she declared she would never more even receive him in her dominions as a visitor. The Cardinal, being apprised of this by some of his

1 This circumstance is mentioned also by Madame Campan.

intimates, was at last persuaded to give up the idea of further importunity; and, pocketing his disgrace, retired with his *hey* dukes and his secretary, the Abbé Georgel, to whom may be attributed all the artful intrigues of his disgraceful diplomacy.[1]

"It is evident that Rohan had no idea, during all his schemes to supplant the Dauphiness by marrying her sister to the King, that the secret hope of Louis XV. had been to divorce the Dauphin and marry the slighted bride himself. Perhaps it is fortunate that Rohan did not know this. A brain so fertile in mischief as his might have converted such a circumstance to baneful uses. But the death of Louis XV. put an end to all the then existing schemes for a change in her position. It was to her a real, though but a momentary triumph. From the hour of her arrival she had a powerful party to cope with; and the fact of her being an Austrian, independent of the jealousy created by her charms, was, in itself,

1 The Abbé Georgel, in his memoirs, justifies the conduct of his superior with great ability; and it was very politic in him to do so, because he thereby exonerates himself from the imputation he would naturally incur from having been a known party, if not a principal, in all which has dishonoured the Cardinal.

a spell to conjure up armies, against which she stood alone, isolated in the face of embattled myriads! But she now reared her head, and her foes trembled in her presence. Yet she could not guard against the moles busy in the earth secretly to undermine her. Nay, had not Louis XV. died at the moment he did, there is scarcely a doubt, from the number and the quality of the hostile influences working on the credulity of the young Dauphin, that Maria Antoinette would have been very harshly dealt with; even the more so from the partiality of the dotard who believed himself to be reigning. But she has been preserved from her enemies to become their sovereign; and if her crowned brow has erewhile been stung by thorns in its coronal, let me not despair of their being hereafter smothered in yet unblown roses.[1]

1 The vain wish of friendship, that has been cruelly disappointed! Fortunate would it have been for Maria Antoinette had she been sent back to Vienna! What an ocean of blood, what writhings of human misery, it might have prevented! Had she been sent back, spotless as the first fallen snow, her life might have passed in that domestic bliss which was her sole ambition, and she would have gone down to the peaceful tombs of her august ancestors, leaving, perhaps, the page of history unstained by some of the greatest of its crimes!

CHAPTER IV

JOURNAL CONTINUED — ACCESSION OF LOUIS XVI. AND MARIA ANTOINETTE—HAPPY BEGINNING—PUBLIC JOY—THE NEW KING MORE AFFECTIONATE TO HIS QUEEN—DU BARRY AND PARTY NO LONGER RECEIVED AT COURT—UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT OF THE QUEEN TO RESTORE CHOISEUL TO THE MINISTRY—INSINUATIONS AGAINST THE QUEEN—VERMOND AND THE KING—THE QUEEN'S MODESTY RESPECTING HER TOILETTE—MADEMOISELLE BERTIN, THE MILLINER, INTRODUCED—ANECDOTE OF THE ROYAL HAIRDRESSER—FALSE CHARGE OF EXTRAVAGANCE AGAINST THE QUEEN—REMARKS OF THE EDITOR.

"THE accession of Louis XVI. and Maria Antoinette to the crown of France took place (May 10, 1774) under the most propitious auspices!

"After the long, corrupt reign of an old debauched Prince, whose vices were degrading to himself and to a nation groaning under the lash of prostitution and caprice, the most cheering changes were expected from the known exemplariness of his successor and the amiableness of his consort. Both were looked up to as models

of goodness. The virtues of Louis XVI. were so generally known that all France hastened to acknowledge them, while the Queen's fascinations acted like a charm on all who had not been invincibly prejudiced against the many excellent qualities which entitled her to love and admiration. Indeed, I never heard an insinuation against either the King or Queen but from those depraved minds which never possessed virtue enough to imitate theirs, or were jealous of the wonderful powers of pleasing that so eminently distinguished Maria Antoinette from the rest of her sex.

"On the death of Louis XV. the entire Court removed from Versailles to the palace of *La Muette*, situate in the Bois de Boulogne, very near Paris. The confluence of Parisians, who came in crowds joyfully to hail the death of the old vitiated Sovereign, and the accession of his adored successors, became quite annoying to the whole royal family. The enthusiasm with which the Parisians hailed their young King, and in particular his amiable young partner, lasted for many days. These spontaneous evidences of attachment were regarded as prognostics of a long reign of happi-

ness. If any inference can be drawn from public opinion, could there be a stronger assurance than this one of uninterrupted future tranquillity to its objects?

"To the Queen herself it was a double triumph. The conspirators, whose depravity had been labouring to make her their victim, departed from the scene of power. The husband, who for four years had been callous to her attractions, became awakened to them. A complete change in the domestic system of the palace was wrought suddenly. The young King, during the interval which elapsed between the death and the interment of his grandfather, from Court etiquette was confined to his apartments. The youthful couple therefore saw each other with less restraint. The marriage was consummated. Maria Antoinette from this moment may date that influence over the heart (would I might add over the head and policy!) of the King, which never slackened during the remainder of their lives.

"Madame Du Barry was much better dealt with by the young King, whom she had always treated with the greatest levity, than she, or her

numerous courtiers, expected. She was allowed her pension, and the entire enjoyment of all her ill-gotten and accumulated wealth: but, of course, excluded from ever appearing at Court, and politically exiled from Paris to the *Château aux Dames*.

"This implacable foe and her infamous coadjutors being removed from farther interference in matters of state by the expulsion of all their own ministers, their rivals, the Duke de Choiseul and his party, by whom Maria Antoinette had been brought to France, were now in high expectation of finding the direction of the Government, by the Queen's influence, restored to that nobleman. But the King's choice was already made. He had been ruled by his aunts, and appointed the ministers suggested by them and his late grandfather's friends, who feared the preponderance of the Austrian influence. The three ladies, Madame la Maréchale de Beauveau, the Duchess de Choiseul, and the Duchess de Grammont, who were all well-known to Louis XVI. and stood high in his opinion for many excellent qualities, and especially for their independent assertion of their own and the Dauphiness's

dignity by retiring from Court in consequence of the supper at which Du Barry was introduced, these ladies, though received on their return thither with peculiar welcome, in vain united their efforts with those of the Queen and the Abbé Vermond, to overcome the prejudice which opposed Choiseul's re-instatement. It was all in vain. The royal aunts, Adelaide especially, hated Choiseul for the sake of Austria, and his agency in bringing Maria Antoinette to France; and so did the King's tutor and governor, the Duke de Vauguyon, who had ever been hostile to any sort of friendship with Vienna; and these formed a host impenetrable even to the influence of the Queen, which was opposed by all the leaders of the prevailing party, who, though they were beginning externally to court, admire, and idolize her, secretly surrounded her by their noxious and viperous intrigues, and, while they lived in her bosom, fattened on the destruction of her fame!

"One of the earliest of the paltry insinuations against Maria Antoinette emanated from her not counterfeiting deep affliction at the decease of the old King. A few days after that event, the

Court received the regular visits of condolence and congratulation of the nobility, whose duty prescribes their attendance upon such occasions; and some of them, among whom were the daughters of Louis XV., not finding a young Queen of nineteen hypocritically bathed in tears, on returning to their abodes declared her the most indecorous of Princesses, and diffused a strong impression of her want of feeling. At the head of these detractors were Mesdames de Guéménée and Marsan, rival pretenders to the favours of the Cardinal de Rohan, who, having by the death of Louis XV. lost their influence and their unlimited power to appoint and dismiss ministers, themselves became ministers to their own evil geniuses, in calumniating her whose legitimate elevation annihilated their monstrous pretensions!

"The Abbé Vermond, seeing the defeat of the party of the Duke de Choiseul, by whom he had been sent to the Court of Vienna on the recommendation of Brienne, began to tremble for his own security. As soon as the Court had arrived at Choisy and he was assured of the

marriage having been consummated, he obtained, with the Queen's consent, an audience of the King, for the purpose of soliciting his sanction to his continuing in his situation. On submitting his suit to the King, His Majesty merely gave a shrug of the shoulders and turned to converse with the Duke d'Aiguillon, who at that moment entered the room. The Abbé stood stupefied, and the Queen, seeing the crestfallen humour of her tutor, laughed and cheered him by remarking, 'There is more meaning in the shrug of a King than in the embrace of a minister. The one always promises, but is seldom sincere; the other is generally sincere, but never promises.' The Abbé, not knowing how to interpret the dumb answer, finding the King's back turned and his conversation with d'Aiguillon continuing, was retiring with a shrug of his own shoulders to the Queen, when she exclaimed good-humouredly to Louis, laughing and pointing to the Abbé, 'Look! look! see how readily a Church dignitary can imitate the good Christian King, who is at the head of the Church.' The King, seeing the Abbé still waiting, said dryly, 'Sir, you are con-

firmed in your situation,' and then resumed his conversation with the Duke.

"This anecdote is a sufficient proof that Louis XVI. had no prepossession in favour of the Abbé Vermond, and that it was merely not to wound the feelings of the Queen that he was tolerated. The Queen herself was conscious of this, and used frequently to say to me how much she was indebted to the King, for such deference to her private choice, in allowing Vermond to be her secretary, as she did not remember the King's ever having held any communication with the Abbé during the whole time he was attached to the service, though the Abbé always expressed himself with the greatest respect towards the King.

"The decorum of Maria Antoinette would not allow her to endure those public exhibitions of the ceremony of dressing herself which had been customary at Court. This reserve was highly approved by His Majesty; and one of the first reforms she introduced, after the accession, was in the internal discipline of her own apartment.

"It was during one of the visits, apart from

Court etiquette, to the toilet of the Queen, that the Duchess de Chartres, afterwards Duchess of Orleans, introduced the famous Mademoiselle Bertin, who afterwards became so celebrated as the Queen's milliner; the first that was ever allowed to approach a royal palace; and it was months before Maria Antoinette had courage to receive her milliner in any other than the private apartment, which, by the alteration Her Majesty had made in the arrangements of the household, she set apart for the purposes of dressing in comfort by herself and free from all intruders.

"Till then the Queen was not only very plain in her attire, but very economical; a circumstance which, I have often heard her say, gave great umbrage to the other Princesses of the Court of Versailles, who never showed themselves, from the moment they rose till they returned to bed, except in full dress; while she herself made all her morning visits in a simple white cambric gown and straw hat. This simplicity, unfortunately, like many other trifles, whose consequences no foresight would have predicted, tended much to injure Maria Antoinette, not only with the Court

dandies, but the nation; by whom, though she was always censured, she was as suddenly imitated in all she wore, or did.

"From the private closet, which Maria Antoinette reserved to herself, and had now opened to her milliner, she would return, after the great points of habiliment were accomplished, to those who were waiting with memorials at her public toilet, where the hairdresser would finish putting the ornaments in Her Majesty's hair.[1]

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1 The Count de Fersan relates a curious anecdote of an occurrence which caused a great deal of mirth among the visitors of Her Majesty's toilet rendezvous. Mademoiselle Bertin had invented a new head ornament of gauze, ribbons, flowers, beads, and feathers, for the Queen; but the tire-woman, finding it deficient in the dimensions Her Majesty had ordered, by some folds, directed the gauze architect, Mademoiselle Bertin, to alter it so as to conform thoroughly to the model. This was executed; and Maria Antoinette went to her morning visitors. The royal hairdresser, according to custom, was in attendance there, with an embellishment, of which she did not perceive the use. "What are these steps for?" exclaimed she to the tire-woman.—The knight of the comb advanced, and, making a most profound reverence, humbly represented to Her Majesty that, Mademoiselle Bertin having so enormously increased the height of the head ornaments, it would be impossible for him to establish them upon a firm foundation, unless he could have a complete command of the head they were to be fixed on

"The King made Maria Antoinette a present of *Le Petit Trianon*. Much has been said of the extravagant expense lavished by her upon this spot. I can only declare that the greater part of the articles of furniture which had not been worn out by time or were not worm or moth-eaten, and her own bed among them, were taken from the apartments of former Queens, and some of them had actually belonged to Anne of Austria, who, like Maria Antoinette, had purchased them out of her private savings. Hence it is clear that neither of the two Queens were chargeable to the State even for those little indulgences, which every private lady of property is permitted from her husband, without coming under the lash of censure.

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and, being but of the middle size and Her Majesty very tall, he could not achieve the duty of his office without mounting three or four steps, which he did, to the great amusement of the Queen and the whole party, and thus placed the *ne plus ultra* of Mademoiselle Bertin's invention, to the best of his own judgment, on the pinnacle of the royal head! As Hamlet says of Yorick—"Alas! where be your flashes of merriment now?"—Who would have dared, at that toilet, and among those smiles, to have prognosticated the cruel fate of the head which then attracted such general admiration!

"Her allowance as Queen of France was no more than 300,000 francs (£12,250). It is well known that she was generous, liberal, and very charitable; that she paid all her expenses, regularly, respecting her household, Trianon, her dresses, diamonds, millinery, and everything else; her Court establishment excepted, and some few articles, which were paid by the civil list. She was one of the first Queens in Europe, had the first establishment in Europe, and was obliged to keep up the most refined and luxurious Court in Europe; and all upon means no greater than had been assigned to many of the former bigotted Queens, who led a cloistered life, retired from the world without circulating their wealth among the nation which supplied them with so large a revenue; and yet who lived and died uncensured for hoarding from the nation what ought at least to have been in part expended for its advantage.[1]

1 The Queens of England, who never had occasion to keep a Court like that of France, besides the revenue allowed them, it is said, and with some authority, have sinecures, resulting merely from the insertion of their names in the liturgy of eighty thousand pounds a year; and it is farther added, that Madame Schwallemberg was of no little service

"And yet of all the extra expenditure which the dignity and circumstances of Maria Antoinette exacted, not a franc came from the public treasury; but everything out of her majesty's private purse and savings from the above three hundred thousand francs, which was an infinitely less sum than Louis XIV. had lavished yearly on the Duchess de Montespan, and less than half what Louis XV. had expended on the two last favourites, Pompadour and Du Barry. These two women, as clearly appeared from the private registers, found among the papers of Louis XV. after his death, by Louis XVI. (but which, out of respect for the

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to herself and others, in exercising the brokership of these ecclesiastical benefices.

Now, then, for all this outcry against the extravagance of the Court of France, levelled in particular against Maria Antoinette, for having lavished the national wealth, upon which pretext her life was made a scene of suffering, and her death a martyrdom! Let me take a momentary retrospect of the modest expenses of her murderers, the scrupulous *sans culottes*, who succeeded the Court of Louis XVI. and committed all their horrors in the name of national economy; for here is the record taken from the public register of the 500 tyrants, mountebank ragamuffins, over-throwers of thrones, king-killers, and sworn enemies of royalty, slaves to the five buffoons of leaders, whose only virtue was that of wearing a filthy shirt a month, and then

memory of his grandfather, he destroyed), these two women had amassed more property in diamonds and other valuables than all the Queens of France from the days of Catherine de Medicis up to those of Maria Antoinette.[1]

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turning it for the comfort and enjoyment of clean linen next their polluted bodies!

MINISTERIAL PUBLIC EXPENSES.

30 millions of francs			au ministre de la justice.
900	„	„	à celui de l'interieur.
200	„	„	à celui des finances.
1200	„	„	à celui de la guerre.
50	„	„	à celui des relations extérieures.
600	„	„	à celui de la marine.

Nearly three thousand millions, or three milliards, besides two millions of secret service money in that particular year, which sometimes, according to the quantity and quality of their spies, exceeded this sum, but which never was less during this anarchial government of miscreants. I have appended this trifling account, merely to give the reader an idea of what naturally became the farther expenses with which the nation was afterwards overburthened to support these regicide *sans culottes*, when, in the short time which elapsed between the plundering bloody government of Robespierre and the return to a taste for *culottes*, no less a sum than 20 louis was expended on the mere embroidery of the flaps of one pair for the *public service!*

1 The pensions and private landed property which Du Barry was allowed to enjoy unmolested till the fatal period of the Revolution; besides that of her predecessor; being divided at her death among different branches of her nearest relations, has continued ever since their legitimate inheritance.

"Such was the goodness of heart of the excellent Queen of Louis XVI., such the benevolence of her character, that not only did she pay all the pensions of the invalids left by her predecessors, but she distributed in public and private charities greater sums than any of the former Queens, thus increasing her expenses without any proportionate augmentation of her resources.[1]

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1 Indeed, could Louis XVI. have foreseen—when, in order not to expose the character of his predecessor and to honour the dignity of the throne and monarchy of France, he destroyed the papers of his grandfather—what an arm of strength he would have possessed in preserving them, against the accusers of his unfortunate Queen and himself, he never could have thrown away such means of establishing a most honourable contrast between his own and former reigns. His career exhibits no superfluous expenditure. Its economy was most rigid. No sovereign was ever more scrupulous with the public money. He never had any public or private predilection; no dilapidated minister for a favourite; no courtezan intrigue. For gaming he had no fondness; and, if his abilities were not splendid, he certainly had no predominating vices.

NOTE.

I must once more quit the journal of the Princess. Her highness here ceases to record particulars of the early part of the reign of Louis XVI. and everything essential upon those times is too well known to render it desirable to detain the reader by an attempt to supply the deficiency. It is enough to state that the secret unhappiness of the Queen at not yet having the assurance of an heir was by no means weakened by the impatience of the people, nor by the accouchement of the Countess d'Artois of the Duke d'Angoulême. While the Queen continued the intimacy, and even held her parties at the apartments of the Duchess that she might watch over her friend, even in this triumph over herself the *poissardes* grossly insulted her in her misfortune, and coarsely called on her to *give heirs to the throne!*

A consolation, however, for the unkind feeling of the populace was about to arise in the delights of one of her strongest friendships. I am come to the epoch when Her Majesty first formed an acquaintance with the Princess Lamballe.

After a few words of my own on the family of her highness, I shall leave her to pursue her beautiful

and artless narrative of her parentage, early sorrows, and introduction to Her Majesty, unbroken.

The journal of the history of Maria Antoinette, after this slight interruption for the private history of her friend, will become blended with the journal of the Princess Lamballe, and both thenceforward proceed in their course together, like their destinies, which from that moment never became disunited.

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CHAPTER V

NOTES OF THE EDITOR—FAMILY OF THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE — *JOURNAL RESUMED* — HER OWN ACCOUNT OF HERSELF — DUKE AND DUCHESS DE PENTHIÈVRE — MADEMOISELLE DE PENTHIÈVRE AND PRINCE LAMBALLE—KING OF SARDINIA—INGENIOUS AND ROMANTIC ANECDOTES OF THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE'S MARRIAGE —THE DUKE DE CHARTRES, AFTERWARDS ORLEANS, MARRIES MADEMOISELLE DE PENTHIÈVRE—DE CHARTRES MAKES APPROACHES TO THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE —BEING SCORNED, CORRUPTS HER HUSBAND—PRINCE LAMBALLE DIES — SLEDGE PARTIES — THE PRINCESS BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH THE QUEEN—IS MADE HER MAJESTY'S SUPERINTENDENT

MARIA THERESA LOUISA CARIGNAN, Princess of Savoy, was born at Turin on the 8th September, 1749.

She had three sisters: two of them were married at Rome, one to the Prince Doria Pamfili, the other to the Prince Colonna; and the third, at Vienna, to the Prince Lobkowitz, whose son was the great patron of the immortal Haydn,[1] the

1 The celebrated Haydn was, even at the age of 74, when I last saw him at Vienna, still the most good-humoured *bon*

celebrated composer. She had a brother also, the Prince Carignan, who, marrying against the consent of his family, was no longer received by them; but the unremitting and affectionate attention which the Princess Lamballe paid to him and his new connections was an ample com-

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vivant of his age. He delighted in telling the origin of his good fortune, which he said he entirely owed to a bad wife!

When he was first married, he said, finding no remedy against domestic squabbles, he used to quit his bad hah and go and enjoy himself with his good friends, who were Hungarians and Germans, for weeks together. Once, having returned home after a considerable absence, his wife, while he was in bed next morning, followed her husband's example: she did even more, for she took all his clothes, even to his shoes, stockings, and small clothes, nay, everything he had, along with her! Thus situated, he was under the necessity of doing something to cover his nakedness; and this, he himself acknowledged, was the first cause of his seriously applying himself to the profession which has since made his name immortal.

He used to laugh, saying, "I was from that time so habituated to study that my wife, often fearing it would injure me, would threaten me with the same operation if I did not go out and amuse myself; but then," added he, "I was grown old, and she was sick and no longer jealous." He spoke remarkably good Italian, though he had never been in Italy, and on my going to Vienna to hear his "Creation," he promised to accompany me back to Italy; but he unfortunately died before I returned to Vienna from Carlsbad.

pensation for the loss he sustained in the severity of his other sisters.[1]

With regard to the early life of the Princess Lamballe, the arranger of these pages must now leave her to pursue her own beautiful and artless narrative unbroken, up to the epoch of her appointment to the household of the Queen. It will be recollected that the papers of which the reception has been already described in the introduction formed the private journal of this most amiable princess; and those passages relating to her own early life being the most connected part of them, it has been thought that to disturb them would be a kind of sacrilege. After the appointment of her highness to the superintendence of the Queen's household, her manuscripts again become confused, and fall into scraps and fragments, which will require to be once more rendered clear by the recollections of

1 If I mistake not, the present Prince Carignan, famous in the late history of Piedmont, is a son of that marriage, the same who is now distinguished by the title of "Prince of the Epaulets of a French soldier of the Trocadero."

The Prince Carignan I speak of has been united to the daughter of the late Grand Duke of Tuscany, and is now the only male heir to the crown of Sardinia, Piedmont, Savoy, &c.

events and conversations by which the preceding chapters have been assisted.

"I was the favourite child of a numerous family, and intended, almost at my birth—as is generally the case among princes who are nearly allied to crowned heads—to be united to one of the Princes, my near relation, of the royal house of Sardinia.

"A few years after this, the Duke and Duchess de Penthièvre arrived at Turin, on their way to Italy, for the purpose of visiting the different Courts, to make suitable marriage contracts for both their infant children.

"These two children were Mademoiselle de Penthièvre, afterwards the unhappy Duchess of Orleans, and their idolized son, the Prince Lamballe.[1]

"Happy would it have been both for the Prince who was destined to the former and

1 The father of Louis Alexander Joseph Stanislaus de Bourbon Penthièvre, Prince Lamballe, was the son of the Count de Toulouse, himself a natural son of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan, who was considered as the most wealthy of all the natural children, in consequence of Madame de Montespan having artfully entrapped the famous Mademoiselle de Montpensier to make over her immense fortune to him as her heir after her death, as the

the Princess who was given to the latter, had these unfortunate alliances never taken place.

"The Duke and Duchess de Penthièvre became so singularly attached to my beloved parents, and, in particular, to myself, that the very day they first dined at the Court of Turin, they mentioned the wish they had formed, of uniting me to their young son, the Prince Lamballe.

"The King of Sardinia, as the head of the house of Savoy and Carignan, said there had been some conversation as to my becoming a member of his royal family; but, as I was so very young at the time, many political reasons might arise to create motives for a change in the projected alliance. 'If, therefore, the Prince Carignan,' said the King, 'be anxious to settle his daughter's marriage, by any immediate matrimonial alliance, I certainly shall not avail myself of any prior engagement, nor oppose any obstacle in the way of its solemnization.'

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price of liberating her husband from imprisonment in the Bastille, and herself from a ruinous prosecution, for having contracted this marriage contrary to the express commands of her royal cousin, Louis XIV.—*Vide Histoire de Louis* XIV. *par Voltaire.*

"The consent of the King being thus unexpectedly obtained by the Prince, so desirable did the arrangement seem to the Duke and Duchess that the next day the contract was concluded with my parents for my becoming the wife of their only son, the Prince Lamballe.

"I was too young to be consulted. Perhaps, had I been older the result would have been the same, for it generally happens in these great family alliances that the parties most interested, and whose happiness is most concerned, are the least thought of. The Prince was, I believe, at Paris, under the tuition of his governess, and I was in the nursery, heedless, and totally ignorant of my future good or evil destination!

"So truly happy and domestic a life as that led by the Duke and Duchess de Penthièvre seemed to my family to offer an example too propitious not to secure to me a degree of felicity with a private prince, very rarely the result of royal unions! of course, their consent was given with alacrity. When I was called upon to do homage to my future parents, I had so little idea, from my extreme youthfulness, of what was going

on that I set them all laughing, when, on being asked if I should like to become the *consort* of the Prince Lamballe, I said, 'Yes, I am very fond of music!'—'No, my dear,' resumed the good and tender-hearted Duke de Penthièvre, 'I mean, would you have any objection to become his wife?'—'No, nor any other person's!' was the innocent reply, which increased the mirth of all the guests at my expense.

"Happy, happy days of youthful, thoughtless innocence, luxuriously felt and appreciated under the thatched roof of the cottage, but unknown and unattainable beneath the massive pile of a royal palace and a gemmed crown! Scarcely had I entered my teens when my adopted parents strewed flowers of the sweetest fragrance to lead me to the sacred altar, that promised the bliss of blisses, but which, too soon, from the foul machinations of envy, jealousy, avarice, and a still more criminal passion, proved to me the altar of my sacrifice!

"My misery and my uninterrupted grief may be dated from the day my beloved sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de Penthièvre, sullied her hand by its

union with the Duke de Chartres.[1] From that moment all comfort, all prospect of connubial happiness, left my young and affectionate heart, plucked thence by the very roots, never more again to bloom there. Religion and philosophy were the only remedies remaining.

"I was a bride when an infant, a wife before I was a woman, a widow before I was a mother, or had the prospect of becoming one! Our union was, perhaps, an exception to the general rule. We became insensibly the more attached to each other the more we were acquainted, which rendered the more severe the separation, when we were torn asunder never to meet again in this world!

"After I left Turin, though everything for my reception at the palaces of Toulouse and Rambouillet had been prepared in the most sumptuous style of magnificence, yet such was my agitation that I remained convulsively speechless for many hours, and all the affectionate attention of the

1 Afterwards Duke of Orleans, and the celebrated revolutionary *Philip Égalité*.

family of the Duke de Penthièvre could not calm my feelings.

"Among those who came about me was the bridegroom himself, whom I had never yet seen. So anxious was he to have his first acquaintance *incognito* that he set off from Paris the moment he was apprised of my arrival in France and presented himself as the Prince's page. As he had outgrown the figure of his portrait I received him as such; but the Prince, being better pleased with me than he had apprehended he should be, could scarcely avoid discovering himself. During our journey to Paris I myself disclosed the interest with which the supposed page had inspired me. 'I hope,' exclaimed I, 'my prince will allow his page to attend me, for I like him much.'

"What was my surprise when the Duke de Penthièvre presented me to the Prince and I found in him the page for whom I had already felt such an interest! We both laughed and wanted words to express our mutual sentiments. This was really love at first sight.[1]

1 The young Prince was enraptured at finding his lovely bride so superior in personal charms to the description which

"The Duke de Chartres, then possessing a very handsome person and most insinuating address, soon gained the affections of the amiable Mademoiselle Penthièvre. Becoming thus a member of the same family, he paid me the most assiduous attention. From my being his sister-in-law, and knowing he was aware of my great attachment to his young wife, I could have no idea that his views were criminally levelled at my honour, my happiness, and my future peace of

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had been given of her, and even to the portrait sent to him from Turin. Indeed, she must have been a most beautiful creature, for when I left her in the year 1792, though then five-and-forty years of age, from the freshness of her complexion, the elegance of her figure, and the dignity of her deportment, she certainly did not appear to be more than thirty. She had a fine head of hair, and she took great pleasure in showing it unornamented. I remember one day, on her coming hastily from the bath, as she was putting on her dress, her cap falling off, her hair completely covered her!

The circumstances of her death always make me shudder at the recollection of this incident! I have been assured by Mesdames Mackau, de Soucle, the Countess de Noailles (not Duchess, as Mademoiselle Bertin has created her in her Memoirs of that name), and others, that the Princess Lamballe was considered the most beautiful and accomplished Princess at the Court of Louis XV., adorned with all the grace, virtue, and elegance of manner which so eminently distinguished her through life.

mind. How, therefore, was I astonished and shocked when he discovered to me his desire to supplant the legitimate object of my affections, whose love for me equalled mine for him! I did not expose this baseness of the Duke de Chartres out of filial affection for my adopted father, the Duke de Penthièvre; out of the love I bore his amiable daughter, she being pregnant; and above all in consequence of the fear I was under of compromising the life of the Prince my husband, who I apprehended might be lost to me if I did not suffer in silence. But still, through my silence he *was* lost—and oh, how dreadfully! The Prince was totally in the dark as to the real character of his brother-in-law. He blindly became every day more and more attached to the man, who was then endeavouring by the foulest means to blast the fairest prospects of his future happiness in life! But my guardian angel protected me from becoming a victim to seduction, defeating every attack by that prudence which has hitherto been my invincible shield.

"Guilt unpunished in its first crime, rushes onward, and hurrying from one misdeed to another,

like the flood-tide, drives all before it! My silence and his being defeated without reproach, armed him with courage for fresh daring, and he too well succeeded in embittering the future days of my life, as well as those of his own affectionate wife, and his illustrious father-in-law, the virtuous Duke de Penthièvre, who was to all a father.

"To revenge himself upon me for the repulse he met with, this man inveigled my young, inexperienced husband from his bridal bed to those infected with the nauseous poison of every vice! Poor youth! he soon became the prey of every refinement upon dissipation and studied debauchery, till at length his sufferings made his life a burthen, and he died in the most excruciating agonies both of mind and body, in the arms of a disconsolate wife and a distracted father—and thus, in a few short months, at the age of eighteen, was I left a widow to lament my having become a wife!

"I was in this situation, retired from the world and absorbed in grief, with the ever beloved and revered illustrious father of my murdered lord, endeavouring to soothe his pangs for the loss of those comforts in a child with which my cruel

disappointment forbade my ever being blest—though, in the endeavour to soothe, I often only aggravated both his and my own misery at our irretrievable loss—when a ray of unexpected light burst upon my dreariness. It was amid this gloom of human agony, these heart-rending scenes of real mourning, that the brilliant star shone to disperse the clouds, which hovered over our drooping heads, —to dry the hot briny tears which were parching up our miserable vegetating existence—it was in this crisis that Maria Antoinette came, like a messenger sent down from Heaven, graciously to offer the balm of comfort in the sweetest language of human compassion. The pure emotions of her generous soul made her unceasing, unremitting, in her visits to two mortals who must else have perished under the weight of their misfortunes. But for the consolation of her warm friendship we must have sunk into utter despair!

"From that moment I became seriously attached to the Queen of France. She dedicated a great portion of her time to calm the anguish of my poor heart, though I had not yet accepted the honour of becoming a member of Her Majesty's

household. Indeed, I was a considerable time before I could think of undertaking a charge I felt myself so completely incapable of fulfilling.[1] I endeavoured to check the tears that were pouring down my cheeks, to conceal in the Queen's presence the real feelings of my heart, but the effort only served to increase my anguish when she had departed. Her attachment to me, and the cordiality with which she distinguished herself towards the Duke de Penthièvre, gave her a place

1 I am under the necessity of correcting an error of Madame Campan's in vol. i. page 129.—The Queen had been long attached to the Princess Lamballe before the sledge parties took place, though it was only during that amusement that the superintendence of the household of the Queen was revived in her favour. It is not at all likely, from the unlimited authority and power which the situation gave a superintendent over Her Majesty, that the Queen, who was so scrupulously particular with respect to the meanest of the persons who held any charge in her household, should have placed herself under the immediate control of one whose office might itself be a check upon her own movements without first being thoroughly assured of the principles, morals, character, and general conduct of the individual destined to a post of such importance. Nothing can be more absurd than to believe that the Queen could have been so heedless as to have nominated the Princess Lamballe her superintendent *ex abrupta* merely because she was the Princess Lamballe.

in that heart, which had been chilled by the fatal vacuum left by its first inhabitant; and Maria Antoinette was the only rival through life that usurped his pretensions, though she could never wean me completely from his memory.

"My health, from the melancholy life I led, had so much declined that my affectionate father, the Duke de Penthièvre, with whom I continued to reside, was anxious that I should emerge from my retirement for the benefit of my health. Sensible of his affection, and having always honoured his counsels, I took his advice in this instance. It being in the hard winter, when so many persons were out of bread, the Queen, the Duchess of Orleans, the Duke de Penthièvre, and myself, introduced the German sledges, in which we were followed by most of the nobility and the rich citizens. This afforded considerable employment to different artificers. The first use I made of my own new vehicle was to visit, in company of the Duke de Penthièvre, the necessitious poor families and our pensioners. In the course of our rounds we met the Queen.

"'I suppose,' exclaimed Her Majesty, 'you

also are laying a good foundation for my work! Heavens! what must the poor feel! I am wrapped up like a diamond in a box, covered with furs, and yet I am chilled with cold!'

"'That feeling sentiment,' said the Duke, 'will soon warm many a cold family's heart with gratitude to bless your Majesty!'

"'Why, yes,' replied Her Majesty, showing a long piece of paper containing the names of those to whom she intended to afford relief—'I have only collected two hundred yet on my list, but the curé will do the rest and help me to draw the strings of my privy purse! But I have not half done my rounds. I daresay before I return to Versailles I shall have as many more, and, since we are engaged in the same business, pray come into my sledge and do not take my work out of my hands! Let me have for once the merit of doing something good!'

"On the coming up of a number of other vehicles belonging to the sledge party, the Queen added, 'Do not say anything about what I have been telling you!' for Her Majesty never wished what she did in the way of charity or donations

should be publicly known, the old pensioners excepted, who, being on the list, could not be concealed; especially as she continued to pay all those she found of the late Queen of Louis XV. She was remarkably delicate and timid with respect to hurting the feelings of anyone; and, fearing the Duke de Penthièvre might not be pleased at her pressing me to leave him in order to join her, she said, 'Well, I will let you off, Princess, on your both promising to dine with me at Trianon; for the King is hunting, not deer, but wood for the poor, and he will see his game off to Paris before he comes back.'

"The Duke begged to be excused, but wished me to accept the invitation, which I did, and we parted, each to pursue our different sledge excursions.

"At the hour appointed, I made my appearance at Trianon, and had the honour to dine *tête-à-tête* with Her Majesty, which was much more congenial to my feelings than if there had been a party, as I was still very low-spirited and unhappy.

"After dinner, 'My dear Princess,' said the

Queen to me, 'at your time of life you must not give yourself up entirely to the dead. You wrong the living. We have not been sent into the world for ourselves. I have felt much for your situation, and still do so, and therefore hope, as long as the weather permits, that you will favour me with your company to enlarge our sledge excursions. The King and my dear sister Elizabeth are also much interested about your coming on a visit to Versailles. What think you of our plan?'

"I thanked Her Majesty, the King, and the Princess, for their kindness, but I observed that my state of health and mind could so little correspond in any way with the gratitude I should owe them for their royal favours that I trusted a refusal would be attributed to the fact of my consciousness how much rather my society must prove an annoyance and a burthen than a source of pleasure.

"My tears flowing down my cheeks rapidly while I was speaking, the Queen, with that kindness for which she was so eminently distinguished, took me by the hand, and with her handkerchief dried my face.

"'I am,' said the Queen, 'about to renew a situation, which has for some time past lain dormant; and I hope, my dear Princess, therewith to establish my own private views, in forming the happiness of a worthy individual.'

"I replied that such a plan must insure Her Majesty the desired object she had in view, as no individual could be otherwise than happy under the immediate auspices of so benevolent and generous a Sovereign.

"The Queen, with great affability, as if pleased with my observation, only said, 'If you really think as you speak, my views are accomplished.'

"My carriage was announced, and I then left Her Majesty, highly pleased at her gracious condescension, which evidently emanated from the kind wish to raise my drooping spirits from their melancholy.

"Gratitude would not permit me to continue long without demonstrating to Her Majesty the sentiments her kindness had awakened in my heart.

"I returned next day with my sister-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans, who was much esteemed

by the Queen, and we joined the sledge parties with Her Majesty.

"On the third or fourth day of these excursions I again had the honour to dine with Her Majesty, when, in the presence of the Princess Elizabeth, she asked me if I were still of the same opinion with respect to the person it was her intention to add to her household?

"I myself had totally forgotten the topic and entreated Her Majesty's pardon for my want of memory, and begged she would signify to what subject she alluded.

"The Princess Elizabeth laughed. 'I thought,' cried she, 'that you had known it long ago! The Queen, with His Majesty's consent, has nominated you, my dear Princess (embracing me), superintendent of her household.'

"The Queen, also embracing me, said, 'Yes; it is very true. You said the individual destined to such a situation could not be otherwise than happy; and I am myself thoroughly happy in being able thus to contribute towards rendering you so.'

"I was perfectly at a loss for a moment

or two, but, recovering myself from the effect of this unexpected and unlooked for preferment, I thanked Her Majesty with the best grace I was able for such an unmerited mark of distinction.

"The Queen, perceiving my embarrassment, observed, 'I knew I should surprise you; but I thought your being established at Versailles much more desirable for one of your rank and youth than to be, as you were, with the Duke de Penthièvre; who, much as I esteem his amiable character and numerous great virtues, is by no means the most cheering companion for my charming Princess. From this moment let our friendships be united in the common interest of each other's happiness.'

"The Queen took me by the hand. The Princess Elizabeth, joining hers, exclaimed to the Queen, 'Oh, my dear sister! let me make the trio in this happy union of friends!'

"In the society of her adored Majesty and of her saint-like sister Elizabeth I have found my only balm of consolation! Their graciously condescending to sympathise in the grief with which I was overwhelmed from the cruel dis-

appointment of my first love, filled up in some degree the vacuum left by his loss, who was so prematurely ravished from me in the flower of youth, leaving me a widow at eighteen; and though that loss is one I never can replace or forget, the poignancy of its effect has been in a great degree softened by the kindnesses of my excellent father-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre, and the relations resulting from my situation with, and the never-ceasing attachment of my beloved royal mistress.

CHAPTER VI

OBSERVATIONS OF THE EDITOR ON THE VARIOUS PARTIES AGAINST LAMBALLE IN CONSEQUENCE OF HER APPOINTMENT—ITS INJURY TO THE QUEEN—PARTICULARS OF LAMBALLE, THE DUTIES OF HER OFFICE, AND HER CONDUCT IN IT—THE POLIGNACS—CHARACTER OF THE COUNTESS DIANA.—*JOURNAL. RESUMED*—ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST INTRODUCTION TO THE QUEEN OF THE DUCHESS JULIE DE POLIGNAC—THE QUEEN'S SUDDEN AND VIOLENT ATTACHMENT TO HER—CALUMNIES RESULTING FROM IT—REMARK ON FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS—LAMBALLE RECEDES FROM THE QUEEN'S INTIMACY—AT THE DUKE'S (HER FATHER-IN-LAW) IS NEAR FALLING A VICTIM TO POISON—ALARM OF THE QUEEN, WHO GOES TO HER AND FORCES HER BACK TO COURT—HER MAJESTY ANNOYED AT LAMBALLE'S NOT VISITING THE POLIGNACS—HER REASONS—THE ABBÉ VERMOND RETIRES AND RETURNS

THE connexion of the Princess Lamballe with the Queen, of which she has herself described the origin in the preceding chapter, proved so important in its influence upon the reputation and fate of both these illustrious victims, that I must once more withdraw the attention of the reader, to

explain, from personal observation and confidential disclosures, the leading causes of the violent dislike which was kindled in the public against an intimacy, that it would have been most fortunate had Her Majesty preferred through life to every other.

The selection of a friend by the Queen, and the sudden elevation of that friend to the highest station in the royal household could not fail to alarm the selfishness of courtiers, who always feel themselves injured by the favour shown to others. An obsolete office was revived in favour of the Princess Lamballe. In the time of Maria Leckzinska, wife of Louis XV., the office of superintendent, then held by Mademoiselle de Clermont, was suppressed when its holder died. The office gave a control over the inclinations of queens by which Maria Leckzinska was sometimes inconvenienced; and it had lain dormant ever since. Its restoration by a queen who it was believed could be guided by no motive but the desire to seek pretexts for showing undue favour, was of course eyed askance, and ere long openly calumniated.

The Countess de Noailles, who never could forget the title the Queen gave her of *Madame*

Etiquette, nor forgive the frequent jokes which Her Majesty passed upon her antiquated formality, availed herself of the opportunity offered by her husband's being raised to the dignity of Marshal of France, to resign her situation on the appointment of the Princess Lamballe as superintendent. The Countess retired with feelings embittered against her royal mistress, and her annoyance in the sequel ripened into enmity. The Countess was attached to a very powerful party, not only at Court but scattered throughout the kingdom. Her discontent arose from the circumstance of no longer having to take her orders from the Queen direct but from her superintendent. Ridiculous as this may seem to an impartial observer, it created one of the most powerful hostilities against which Her Majesty had afterwards to contend.

Though the Queen esteemed the Countess de Noailles for her many good qualities, yet she was so much put out of her way by the rigour with which the Countess enforced forms, which to Her Majesty appeared puerile and absurd, that she felt relieved, and secretly gratified, by her retirement. It will be shown hereafter to

what an excess the Countess was eventually carried by her malice.

One of the popular objections to the revival of the office of superintendent in favour of the Princess Lamballe arose from its reputed extravagance. This was as groundless as the other charges against the Queen, The etiquettes of dress, and the requisite increase of every other expense, from the augmentation of every article of the necessaries as well as the luxuries of life, made a treble difference between the expenditure of the circumscribed Court of Maria Leckzinska and that of Louis XVI.; yet the Princess Lamballe received no more salary[1] than had been allotted to Mademoiselle de Clermont in the self-same situation half a century before.

So far from possessing the slightest propensity either to extravagance in herself or to the encouragement of extravagance in others, the

1 And even that salary she never appropriated to any private use of her own, being amply supplied through the generous bounty of her father-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre; and latterly, to my knowledge, so far from receiving any pay, she often paid the Queen's and Princess Elizabeth's bills out of her own purse.

Princess Lamballe was a model of prudence, and upon those subjects, as indeed upon all others, the Queen could not have had a more discreet counsellor. She eminently contributed to the charities of the Queen, who was the mother of the fatherless, the support of the widow, and the general protectress and refuge of suffering humanity. Previous to the purchase of any article of luxury, the Princess would call for the list of the pensioners: if anything were due on that account, it was instantly paid, and the luxury dispensed with.

She never made her appearance in the Queen's apartments except at established hours. This was scrupulously observed till the Revolution. Circumstances then obliged her to break through forms. The Queen would only receive communications, either written or verbal, upon the subjects growing out of that wretched crisis, in the presence of the Princess; and hence her apartments were open to all who had occasion to see Her Majesty. This made their intercourse more constant and unceremonious. But before this, the Princess only went to the royal presence at fixed hours, unless

she had memorials to present to the King, Queen, or ministers, in favour of such as asked for justice or mercy. Hence, whenever the Princess entered before the stated times, the Queen would run and embrace her, and exclaim — "Well, my dear Princess Lamballe! what widow, what orphan, what suffering, or oppressed petitioner am I to thank for this visit? for I know you never come to me empty-handed when you come unexpectedly!" — The Princess, on these occasions, often had the petitioners waiting in an adjoining apartment, that they might instantly avail themselves of any inclination the Queen might show to see them.

Once the Princess was deceived by a female painter of doubtful character, who supplicated her to present a work she had executed to the Queen. I myself afterwards returned that work to its owner. Thenceforward, the Princess became very rigid in her inquiries, previous to taking the least interest in any application, or consenting to present anyone personally to the King or Queen. She required thoroughly to be informed of the nature of the request, and of the merit and character of

the applicant, before she would attend to either. Owing to this caution Her Highness scarcely ever after met with a negative. In cases of great importance, though the Queen's compassionate and good heart needed no stimulus to impel her to forward the means of justice, the Princess would call the influence of the Princess Elizabeth to her aid; and Elizabeth never sued in vain.

Maria Antoinette paid the greatest attention to all memorials. They were regularly collected every week by Her Majesty's private secretary, the Abbé Vermond. I have myself seen many of them, when returned from the Princess Lamballe, with the Queen's marginal notes in her own handwriting and the answers dictated by Her Majesty to the different officers of the departments relative to the nature of the respective demands. She always recommended the greatest attention to all public documents, and annexed notes to such as passed through her hands to prevent their being thrown aside or lost.

One of those who were least satisfied with the appointment of the Princess Lamballe to the office of superintendent was her brother-in-law, the Duke

of Orleans, who, having attempted her virtue on various occasions and been repulsed, became mortified and alarmed at her situation as a check to his future enterprise.

At one time the Duke and Duchess of Orleans were most constant and assiduous in their attendance on Maria Antoinette. They were at all her parties. The Queen was very fond of the Duchess. It is supposed that the interest Her Majesty took in that lady and the steps to which some time afterwards that interest led, planted the first seeds of the unrelenting and misguided hostility which, in the deadliest times of the Revolution, animated the Orleanists against the throne.

The Duke of Orleans, then Duke de Chartres, was never a favourite of the Queen. He was only tolerated at Court on account of his wife and of the great intimacy which subsisted between him and Count d'Artois. Louis XVI. had often expressed his disapprobation of the Duke's character, which his conduct daily justified.

The Princess Lamballe could have no cause to think of her brother-in-law but with horror.

He had insulted her, and in revenge at his defeat, had, it was said, deprived her by the most awful means, of her husband. The Princess was tenderly attached to her sister-in-law, the Duchess. Her attachment could not but make her look very unfavourably upon the circumstance of the Duke's subjecting his wife to the humiliation of residing in the palace with Madame de Genlis, and being forced to receive a person of morals so incorrect as the guardian of her children. The Duchess had complained to her father, the Duke de Penthièvre, in the presence of the Princess Lamballe, of the very great ascendancy Madame de Genlis exercised over her husband; and had even requested the Queen to use her influence in detaching the Duke from this connexion.[1] But she had too much gentleness of nature not presently to forget her resentment. Being much devoted to her husband, rather than irritate him to further neglect by personal remonstrance, she determined to make the best of a bad business,

1 It was generally understood that the Duke had a daughter by Madame de Genlis. This daughter, when grown up, was married to the late Irish Lord Robert Fitzgerald.

and tolerated Madame de Genlis, although she made no secret among her friends and relations of the reason why she did so. Nay, so far did her wish not to disoblige her husband prevail over her own feelings as to induce her to yield at last to his importunities by frequently proposing to present Madame de Genlis to the Queen. But Madame de Genlis never could obtain either a public or a private audience. Though the Queen was a great admirer of merit and was fond of encouraging talents, of which Madame de Genlis was by no means deficient, yet even the account the Duchess herself had given, had Her Majesty possessed no other means of knowledge, would have sealed that lady's exclusion from the opportunities of display at Court, which she sought so earnestly.

There was another source of exasperation against the Duke of Orleans; and the great cause of a new and, though less obtrusive, yet perhaps an equally dangerous foe under all the circumtances, in Madame de Genlis. The anonymous slander of the one was circulated through all France by the other; and spleen and disappointment feathered the venomed arrows shot at the

heart of power by malice and ambition! Be the charge true or false, these anonymous libels were generally considered as the offspring of this lady: they were industriously scattered by the Duke of Orleans; and their frequent refutation by the Queen's friends only increased the malignant industry of their inventor.

An event which proved the most serious of all that ever happened to the Queen, and the consequences of which were distinctly foreseen by the Princess Lamballe and others of her true friends, was now growing to maturity.

The deposed Court oracle, the Countess de Noailles, had been succeeded as literary leader by the Countess Diana Polignac. She was a favourite of the Count d'Artois, and was the first lady in attendance upon the Countess, his wife.[1] The Queen's conduct had always been

1 The Countess Diana Polignac had a much better education, and considerably more natural capacity, than her sister-in-law, the Duchess, and the Queen merely disliked her from her prudish affectation. The Countess d'Artois grew jealous of the Count's intimacy with the Countess Diana. While she considered herself as the only one of the royal family likely to be mother of a future sovereign, she was silent, or perhaps too much engrossed by her castles in

very cool to her. She deemed her a self-sufficient coquette. However, the Countess Diana was a constant attendant at the gay parties, which were then the fashion of the Court, though not greatly admired.

The reader will scarcely need to be informed that the event to which I have just alluded is the introduction by the Countess Diana of her sister-in-law, the Countess Julie Polignac, to the Queen; and having brought the record up to this point I here once more dismiss my own pen for that of the Princess Lamballe.

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the air to think of anything but diadems; but when she saw the Queen producing heirs, she grew out of humour at her lost popularity, and began to turn her attention to her husband's *Endymionship* to this new Diana! When she had made up her mind to get her rival out of her house, she consulted one of the family; but being told that the best means for a wife to keep her husband out of harm's way was to provide him with a domestic occupation for his leisure hours at home, than which nothing could be better than a *hand-maid* under the same roof, she made a merit of necessity and submitted ever after to retain the Countess Diana, as she had been prudently advised. The Countess Diana, in consequence, remained in the family even up to the 17th October, 1789, when she left Versailles in company with the Polignacs and the d'Artois, who all emigrated together from France to Italy and lived at Stria on the Brenta, near Venice, for some time, till the Countess d'Artois went to Turin.

It will be obvious to everyone that I must have been indebted to the conversations of my beloved patroness for most of the sentiments and nearly all the facts I have just been stating; and had the period on which she has written so little as to drive me to the necessity of writing for her been less pregnant with circumstances almost entirely personal to herself, no doubt I should have found more upon that period in her manuscript. But the year of which Her Highness says so little was the year of happiness and exclusive favour; and the Princess was above the vanity of boasting, even privately in the self-confessional of her diary. She resumes her records with her apprehensions; and thus proceeds, describing the introduction of the Countess Julie de Polignac, regretting her ascendancy over the Queen and foreseeing its fatal effects.

"I had only been a twelvemonth in Her Majesty's service, which I believe was the happiest period of both our lives, when, at one of the

Court assemblies, the Countess Julie Polignac was first introduced by her sister-in-law, the Countess Diana Polignac, to the Queen.

"She had lived in the country, quite a retired life, and appeared to be more the motherly woman, and the domestic wife, than the ambitious Court lady, or royal sycophant. She was easy of access, and elegantly plain in her dress and deportment.

"Her appearance at Court was as fatal to the Queen as it was propitious to herself!

"She seemed formed by nature to become a royal favourite; unassuming, remarkably complaisant, possessing a refined taste, with a good-natured disposition, not handsome, but well formed, and untainted by haughtiness or pomposity.

"It would appear, from the effect her introduction had on the Queen, that her domestic virtues were written in her countenance; for she became a royal favourite before she had time to become a candidate for royal favour.

"The Queen's sudden attachment to the Countess Julie produced no alteration in my

conduct, while I saw nothing extraordinary to alarm me for the consequences of any particular marked partiality, by which the character and popularity of Her Majesty might be endangered.[1]

"But, seeing the progress this lady made in the feelings of the Queen's enemies, it became my duty, from the situation I held, to caution Her Majesty against the risks she ran in making her favourites friends; for it was very soon apparent how highly the Court disapproved of this intimacy and partiality: and the same feeling soon found its way to the many-headed monster, the people, who only saw the favourite without considering the charge she held. Scarcely had she felt the warm rays of royal favour, than the chilling blasts of envy and malice began to nip it in the bud of all its promised bliss. Even long before she touched the pinnacle of her grandeur as governess of the royal children

1 The Princess Lamballe was too virtuous, too handsome, and much too noble in character and sentiment, meanly to nourish jealousy or envy. She was as much above it as her personal and mental qualifications were superior to those of her rival.

the blackest calumny began to show itself in prints, caricatures, songs, and pamphlets of every description.

"A reciprocity of friendship between a queen and a subject, by those who never felt the existence of such a feeling as friendship, could only be considered in a criminal point of view. But by what perversion could suspicion frown upon the ties between two married women, both living in the greatest harmony with their respective husbands, especially when both became mothers and so devoted to their offspring? This boundless friendship *did* glow between this calumniated pair — calumniated because the sacredness and peculiarity of the sentiment which united them was too pure to be understood by the grovelling minds who made themselves their sentencers. The friend is the friend's shadow. The real sentiment of friendship, of which *disinterested* sympathy is the sign, cannot exist unless between two of the same sex, because a physical difference involuntarily modifies the complexion of the intimacy where the sexes are opposite, even though there be no physical relations. The Queen

of France had love in her eyes and Heaven in her soul. The Duchess of Polignac, whose person beamed with every charm, could never have been condemned, like the Friars of La Trappe, to the mere *memento mori*.

"When I had made the representations to Her Majesty which duty exacted from me on perceiving her ungovernable partiality for her new favourite, that I might not importune her by the awkwardness naturally arising from my constant exposure to the necessity of witnessing an intimacy she knew I did not sanction, I obtained permission from my royal mistress to visit my father-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre, at Rambouillet, his country seat

"Soon after I arrived there, I was taken suddenly ill after dinner with the most excruciating pains in my stomach. I thought myself dying. Indeed, I should have been so but for the fortunate and timely discovery that I was poisoned:—certainly, not intentionally, by anyone belonging to my dear father's household; but by some execrable hand which had an interest in my death.

"The affair was hushed up with a vague report that some of the made dishes had been prepared in a stew-pan long out of use, which the clerk of the Duke's kitchen had forgotten to get properly tinned.

"This was a doubtful story for many reasons. Indeed, I firmly believe that the poison given me had been prepared in the salt, for everyone at table had eaten of the same dish without suffering the smallest inconvenience.[1]

"The news of this accident had scarcely arrived at Versailles, when the Queen, astounded, and in excessive anxiety, instantly sent off her physician, and her private secretary, the Abbé Vermond, to bring me back to my apartments at Versailles, with strict orders not to leave me a moment at the Duke's, for fear of a second attempt

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1 Had not this unfortunate circumstance occurred, it is probable the Duke de Penthièvre would have prevailed on the Princess to have renounced her situation at Court. What heart-rending grief would it not have spared the grey hairs of her doting father-in-law, and what a sea of crimes might have been obviated, had it pleased Heaven to have ordained her death under the paternal roof of her second father!

of the same nature. Her Majesty had imputed the first to the earnestness I had always shown in support of her interests, and she seemed now more ardent in her kindness towards me from the idea of my being exposed through her means to the treachery of assassins in the dark. The Queen awaited our coming impatiently, and, not seeing the carriages return so quickly as she fancied they ought to arrive, she herself set off for Rambouillet, and did not leave me till she had prevailed on me to quit my father-in-law's, and we both returned together the same night to Versailles, where the Queen in person dedicated all her attention to the restoration of my health.

"As yet, however, nothing in particular had discovered that splendour for which the Polignacs were afterwards so conspicuous.

"Indeed, so little were their circumstances calculated for a Court life, that when the friends of Madame Polignac perceived the growing attachment of the young Queen to the palladium of their hopes, in order to impel Her Majesty's friendship to repair the deficiencies of fortune, they advised the magnet to quit the Court abruptly, assigning

the want of means as the motive of her retreat. The story got wind, and proved propitious.

"The Queen, to secure the society of her friend, soon supplied the resources she required and took away the necessity for her retirement. But the die was cast. In gaining one friend she sacrificed a host. By this act of imprudent preference she lost for ever the affections of the old nobility. This was the gale which drove her back among the breakers.

"I saw the coming storm, and endeavoured to make my sovereign feel its danger. Presuming that my example would be followed, I withdrew from the Polignac society, and vainly flattered myself that prudence would impel others not to encourage Her Majesty's amiable infatuation till the consequences should be irretrievable. But sovereigns are always surrounded by those who make it a point to reconcile them to their follies, however flagrant; and keep them on good terms with themselves, however severely they may be censured by the world.

"If I had read the book of fate I could not have seen more distinctly the fatal results which

actually took place from this unfortunate connexion. The Duchess and myself always lived in the greatest harmony, and equally shared the confidence of the Queen; but it was my duty not to sanction Her Majesty's marked favouritism by my presence. The Queen often expressed her discontent to me upon the subject. She used to tell me how much it grieved her to be denied success in her darling desire of uniting her friends with each other, as they were already united in her own heart. Finding my resolution unalterable, she was mortified, but gave up her pursuit. When she became assured that all importunity was useless, she ever after avoided wounding my feelings by remonstrance, and allowed me to pursue the system I had adopted, rather than deprive herself of my society, which would have been the consequence had I not been left at liberty to follow the dictates of my own sense of propriety in a course from which I was resolved that even Her Majesty's displeasure should not make me swerve.

"Once in particular, at an entertainment given to the Emperor Joseph at Trianon, I re-

member the Queen took the opportunity to repeat how much she felt herself mortified at the course in which I persisted of never making my appearance at the Duchess of Polignac's parties.

"I replied, 'I believe, madam, we are both of us disappointed; but your Majesty has your remedy, by replacing me by a lady less scrupulous.'

"'I was too sanguine,' said the Queen, 'in having flattered myself that I had chosen two friends who would form, from their sympathising and uniting their sentiments with each other, a society which would embellish my private life as much as they adorn their public stations.'

"I said it was by my unalterable friendship and my loyal and dutiful attachment to the sacred person of Her Majesty that I had been prompted to a line of conduct in which the motives whence it arose would impel me to persist while I had the honour to hold a situation under Her Majesty's roof.

"The Queen, embracing me, exclaimed, 'That will be for life, for death alone can separate us!'[1]

1 Good Heaven! What must have been the feelings of these true, these sacred friends, the shadow of each other,

"This is the last conversation I recollect to have had with the Queen upon this distressing subject.

"The Abbé Vermond, who had been Her Majesty's tutor, but who was now her private secretary, began to dread that his influence over her from having been her confidential adviser from her youth upwards would suffer from the rising authority of the all-predominant new favourite. Consequently, he thought proper to remonstrate, not with Her Majesty, but with those about her royal person. The Queen took no notice of these side-wind complaints, not wishing to enter into any explanation of her conduct. On this the Abbé withdrew from Court. But he only retired for a short time, and that to make better terms for the future. Here was a new spring for those who were supplying the army of calumniators with poison. Happy had it been, perhaps, for France and the Queen if Vermond had never returned. But the Abbé was something like a distant country cousin of an English minister, a

on that fatal Tenth of August, which separated them only to meet in a better world!

man of no talents, but who hoped for employment through the power of his kinsman. 'There is nothing on hand now,' answered the minister, 'but a bishop's mitre or a field-marshal's staff.' 'Oh, very well,' replied the countryman; 'either will do for me till something better turns up.' The Abbé, in his retirement finding leisure to reflect that there was no probability of anything 'better turning up' than his post of private secretary, tutor, confidant, and counsellor (and that not always the most correct) of a young and amiable Queen of France, soon made his re-appearance and kept his jealousy of the Polignacs ever after to himself.[1]

"The Abbé Vermond enjoyed much influence with regard to ecclesiastical preferments. He was too fond of his situation ever to contradict or thwart her Majesty in any of her plans; too much of a courtier to assail her ears with the language of truth; and by far too much a clergyman to interest himself but for Mother Church.

1 He remained in the same situation till the horrors of the Revolution drove him from it.

"In short, he was more culpable in not doing his duty than in the mischief he occasioned, for he certainly oftener misled the Queen by his silence than by his advice."

CHAPTER VII

JOURNAL CONTINUED—SLANDERS AGAINST THE EMPRESS MARIA THERESA, ON ACCOUNT OF METASTASIO, GIVE THE QUEEN A DISTASTE FOR PATRONISING LITERATURE—PRIVATE PLAYS AND ACTING—CENSORIOUSNESS OF THOSE WHO WERE EXCLUDED FROM THEM—THE QUEEN'S LOVE OF MUSIC — GLUCK INVITED FROM GERMANY—ANECDOTES OF GLUCK AND HIS ARMIDA—GARAT—VIOTTI—MADAME ST. HUBERTI—VESTRIS

I HAVE already mentioned that Maria Antoinette had no decided taste for literature. Her mind rather sought its amusements in the ball-room, the promenade, the theatre, especially when she herself was a performer, and the concert-room, than in her library and among her books. Her coldness towards literary men may in some degree be accounted for by the disgust which she took at the calumnies and caricatures resulting from her mother's partiality for her own revered teacher, the great Metastasio. The resemblance of most of Maria Theresa's children to that poet was coupled with the great patronage he received

from the Empress; and much less than these circumstances would have been quite enough to furnish a tale for the slanderer, injurious to the reputation of any exalted personage.

"The taste of Maria Antoinette for private theatricals was kept up till the clouds of the Revolution darkened over all her enjoyments.

"These innocent amusements were made subjects of censure against her by the many courtiers who were denied access to them; while some, who were permitted to be present, were too well pleased with the opportunity of sneering at her mediocrity in the art, which those, who could not see her, were ready to criticise with the utmost severity. It is believed that Madame de Genlis found this too favourable an opportunity to be slighted. Anonymous satires upon the Queen's performances, which were attributed to the malice of that authoress, were frequently shown to Her Majesty by good-natured friends. The Duke de Fronsac also, from some situation he held at Court, though not included in the private household of Her Majesty at Trianon, conceiving himself highly injured by not being

suffered to interfere, was much exasperated, and took no pains to prevent others from receiving the infection of his resentment.

"Of all the arts, music was the only one which Her Majesty ever warmly patronised. For music she was an enthusiast. Had her talents in this art been cultivated, it is certain from her judgment in it that she would have made very considerable progress. She sang little French airs with great taste and feeling. She improved much under the tuition of the great composer, her master, the celebrated Sacchini. After his death, Sapio[1] was named his successor; but, between the death of one master and the appointment of another, the revolutionary horrors so increased that her mind was no longer in a state to listen to anything but the howlings of the tempest.

"In her happier days of power, the great Gluck was brought at her request from Germany to Paris. He cost nothing to the public treasury, for Her Majesty paid all his expenses out of her

1 The father of Sapio, the tenor singer, who on coming to England was much patronised by the Duchess of York and the late old Duke of Queensbury.

own purse, leaving him the profits of his operas, which attracted immense sums to the theatre.[1]

"Maria Antoinette paid for the musical education of the French singer, Garat, and pensioned him for her private concerts.

"Her Majesty was the great patroness of the celebrated Viotti, who was also attached to her private musical parties. Before Viotti began to perform his concertos, Her Majesty, with the most amiable condescension, would go round the music saloon, and say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I request you will be silent, and very attentive, and not enter into conversation, while Mr. Viotti is playing, for it interrupts him in the execution of his fine performance.'

"Gluck composed his *Armida* in compliment to the personal charms of Maria Antoinette. I never saw Her Majesty more interested about

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1 To this very day the music of Gluck in France, like the works of our immortal Shakespeare in England, stands the test of time even amid that versatile nation. To outlive French caprice, his compositions must possess, like those of the immortal Sacchini, something strikingly extraordinary. If they are less frequently performed than inferior productions, it is for want of artists equal to their merit.

anything than she was for its success. She became a perfect slave to it. She had the gracious condescension to hear all the pieces through, at Gluck's request, before they were submitted to the stage for rehearsal. Gluck said he always improved his music after he saw the effect it had upon Her Majesty.

"He was coming out of the Queen's apartment one day, after he had been performing one of these pieces for Her Majesty's approbation, when I followed and congratulated him on the increased success he had met with from the whole band of the opera at every rehearsal. 'O my dear Princess!' cried he, 'it wants nothing to make it be applauded up to the seven skies but two such delightful heads as Her Majesty's and your own.'—'Oh, if that be all,' answered I, 'we'll have them painted for you, Mr. Gluck!'—'No, no, no! you do not understand me,' replied Gluck, 'I mean real, real heads.[1] My actresses

1 How little did Gluck think, when he was paying this compliment, or the Princess, when she recorded it, that these two heads were really to be so cruelly severed from their bodies.

are very ugly, and Armida and her confidential lady ought to be very handsome.'

"However great the success of the opera of *Armida*, and certainly it was one of the best productions ever exhibited on the French stage, no one had a better opinion of its composition than Gluck himself. He was quite mad about it. He told the Queen that the air of France had invigorated his musical genius, and that, after having had the honour of seeing Her Majesty, his ideas were so much inspired that his compositions resembled her, and became alike angelic and sublime!

"The first artist who undertook the part of Armida was Madame Saint Huberti. The Queen was very partial to her. She was principal female singer at the French opera, was a German by birth, and strongly recommended by Gluck for her good natural voice. At Her Majesty's request, Gluck himself taught Madame Saint Huberti the part of Armida. Sacchini, also, at the command of Maria Antoinette, instructed her in the style and sublimity of the Italian school, and Mdlle. Bertin, the Queen's dressmaker and milliner, was ordered

to furnish the complete dress for the character.

"The Queen, perhaps, was more liberal to this lady than to any actress upon the stage. She had frequently paid her debts, which were very considerable, for she dressed like a queen whenever she represented one.

"Gluck's consciousness of the merit of his own works, and of their dignity, excited no small jealousy, during the getting up of *Armida*, in his rival with the public, the great Vestris, to whom he scarcely left space to exhibit the graces of his art; and many severe disputes took place between the two rival sharers of the Parisian enthusiasm. Indeed, it was at one time feared that the success of *Armida* would be endangered, unless an equal share of the performance were conceded to the dancers. But Gluck, whose German obstinacy would not give up a note, told Vestris he might compose a ballet in which he would leave him his own way entirely; but that an artist whose profession only taught him to reason with his heels should not kick about works like *Armida* at his pleasure. 'My subject,' added Gluck, 'is taken from the immortal Tasso. My

music has been logically composed, and with the ideas of my head; and, of course, there is very little room left for capering. If Tasso had thought proper to make Rinaldo a dancer he never would have designated him a warrior.'

"Rinaldo was the part Vestris wished to be allotted to his son. However, through the interference of the Queen, Vestris prudently took the part as it had been originally finished by Gluck.

"The Queen was a great admirer and patroness of Augustus Vestris, the god of dance, as he was styled. Augustus Vestris never lost Her Majesty's favour, though he very often lost his sense of the respect he owed to the public, and showed airs and refused to dance. Once he did so when Her Majesty was at the opera. Upon some frivolous pretext he refused to appear. He was, in consequence, immediately arrested. His father, alarmed at his son's temerity, flew to me and with the most earnest supplications implored I would condescend to endeavour to obtain the pardon of Her Majesty. 'My son,' cried he, 'did not know that Her Majesty had honoured the theatre with her presence. Had he been aware of it, could he

have refused to dance for his most bounteous benefactress? I, too, am grieved beyond the power of language to describe, by this *mal àpropos contretemps* between the two houses of Vestris and Bourbon, as we have always lived in the greatest harmony ever since we came from Florence to Paris. My son is very sorry and will dance most bewitchingly if Her Majesty will graciously condescend to order his release!'

"I repeated the conversation *verbatim* to Her Majesty, who enjoyed the arrogance of the Florentine, and sent her page to order young Vestris to be set immediately at liberty.

"Having exerted all the wonderful powers of his art, the Queen applauded him very much. When Her Majesty was about leaving her box, old Vestris appeared at the entrance, leading his son to thank the Queen.

"'Ah, Monsieur Vestris,' said the Queen to the father, 'you never danced as your son has done this evening!'

"'That's very natural, Madame,' answered old Vestris, 'I never had a Vestris, please your Majesty, for a master.'

"'Then you have the greater merit,' replied the Queen, turning round to old Vestris—'Ah, I shall never forget you and Mademoiselle Guimard dancing the menuet de la cour.'

"On this old Vestris held up his head with that peculiar grace for which he was so much distinguished. The old man, though ridiculously vain, was very much of a gentleman in his manners. The father of Vestris was a painter of some celebrity at Florence, and originally from Tuscany.

CHAPTER VIII

JOURNAL CONTINUED—EMPEROR JOSEPH COMES TO FRANCE —INJURIOUS REPORTS OF IMMENSE SUMS OF MONEY GIVEN HIM FROM THE TREASURY—PRINCESS LAMBALLE PRESENTED TO HIM—ANECDOTES TOLD BY HIM OF HIS FAMILY—THE KING ANNOYED BY HIS FREEDOMS—CIRCUMSTANCES THAT OCCURRED WHILE HE WAS SEEKING INFORMATION AMONG THE COMMON PEOPLE—NOTE OF THE EDITOR ON CERTAIN MISTAKES OF MADAME CAMPAN

"THE visit of the favourite brother of Maria Antoinette, the Emperor Joseph the Second, to France, had been long and anxiously expected, and was welcomed by her with delight. The pleasure Her Majesty discovered at having him with her is scarcely credible; and the affectionate tenderness with which the Emperor frequently expressed himself on seeing his favourite sister evinced that their joys were mutual.

"Like everything else, however, which gratified and obliged the Queen, her evil star converted even this into a misfortune. It was said that the French treasury, which was not overflowing,

was still more reduced by the Queen's partiality for her brother. She was accused of having given him immense sums of money; which was utterly false.

"The finances of Joseph were at that time in a situation too superior to those of France to admit of such extravagance, or even to render it desirable. The circumstance which gave a colour to the charge was this:—

"The Emperor, in order to facilitate the trade of his Brabant subjects, had it in contemplation to open the navigation of the Scheldt. This measure would have been ruinous to many of the skippers, as well as to the internal commerce of France. It was considered equally dangerous to the trade and navigation of the North Hollanders. To prevent it, negotiations were carried on by the French minister, though professedly for the mutual interest of both countries, yet entirely at the instigation and on account of the Dutch. The weighty argument of the Dutch to prevent the Emperor from accomplishing a purpose they so much dreaded was a sum of many millions, which passed by means of some monied speculation in

the Exchange through France to its destination at Vienna. It was to see this affair settled that the Emperor declared in Vienna his intention of taking France in his way from Italy, before he should go back to Austria.

"The certainty of a transmission of money from France to Austria was quite enough to awaken the malevolent, who would have taken care even had they inquired into the source whence the money came, never to have made it public. The opportunity was too favourable not to be made the pretext to raise a clamour against the Queen for robbing France to favour and enrich Austria.

"The Emperor, who had never seen me, though he had often heard me spoken of at the Court of Turin, expressed a wish, soon after his arrival, that I should be presented to him. The immediate cause of this let me explain.

"I was very much attached to the Princess Clotilda, whom I had caused to be united to Prince Charles Emanuel of Piedmont. Our family had, indeed, been principally instrumental in the alliances of the two brothers of the King of

France with the two Piedmontese Princesses, as I had been in the marriage of the Piedmontese Prince with the Princess of France. When the Emperor Joseph visited the Court of Turin he was requested when he saw me in Paris to signify the King of Sardinia's satisfaction at my good offices. Consequently, the Emperor lost no time in delivering his message.

"When I was just entering the Queen's apartment to be presented, 'Here,' said Her Majesty, leading me to the Emperor, 'is the Princess,' and, then turning to me, exclaimed, 'Mercy, how cold you are!' The Emperor answered Her Majesty in German, 'What heat can you expect from the hand of one whose heart resides with the dead?' and subjoined, in the same language, 'What a pity that so charming a head should be fixed on a dead body!'

"I affected to understand the Emperor literally, and set him and the Queen laughing by thanking His Imperial Majesty for the compliment.

"The Emperor was exceedingly affable and full of anecdote. Maria Antoinette resembled him in her general manners. The similitude in their easy

openness of address towards persons of merit was very striking. Both always endeavoured to encourage persons of every class to speak their minds freely, with this difference, that Her Majesty in so doing never forgot her dignity or her rank at Court. Sometimes, however, I have seen her, though so perfect in her deportment with inferiors, much intimidated and sometimes embarrassed in the presence of the Princes and Princesses, her equals, who for the first time visited Versailles: indeed, so much so as to give them a very incorrect idea of her capacity. It was by no means an easy matter to cause Her Majesty to unfold her real sentiments or character on a first acquaintance.

"I remember the Emperor one evening at supper when he was exceedingly good-humoured, talkative, and amusing. He had visited all his Italian relations, and had a word for each, man, woman, or child—not a soul was spared. The King scarcely once opened his mouth, except to laugh at some of the Emperor's jokes upon his Italian relations.

"He began by asking the Queen if she punished her husband by making him keep as

many Lents in the same year as her sister did the King of Naples. The Queen not knowing what the Emperor meant, he explained himself, and said, 'When the King of Naples offends his Queen she keeps him on short commons and *soupe maigre* till he has expiated the offence by the penance of humbling himself; and then, and not till then, permits him to return and share the nuptial rights of her bed.'

"'This sister of mine,' said the Emperor, 'is a proficient Queen in the art of man training. My other sister, the Duchess of Parma, is equally scientific in breaking-in horses; for she is constantly in the stables with her grooms, by which she *grooms* a pretty sum yearly in buying, selling, and breaking-in; while the simpleton, her husband, is ringing the bells with the Friars of Colorno to call his good subjects to Mass.'

"'My brother Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, feeds his subjects with plans of economy, a dish that costs nothing, and not only saves him a multitude of troubles in public buildings and public institutions, but keeps the public money in his private coffers; which is

one of the greatest and most classical discoveries a sovereign can possibly accomplish, and I give Leopold much credit for his ingenuity.'

"'My dear brother Ferdinand, Arch-duke of Milan, considering he is only Governor of Lombardy, is not without industry; and I am told when out of the glimpse of his dragon the holy Beatrix, his Arch-duchess, sells his corn in the time of war to my enemies, as he does to my friends in the time of peace. So he loses nothing by his speculations!'

"The Queen checked the Emperor repeatedly, though she could not help smiling at his caricatures.

"'As to you, my dear Maria Antoinette,' continued the Emperor, not heeding her, 'I see you have made great progress in the art of painting. You have lavished more colour on one cheek than Rubens would have required for all the figures in his cartoons.' Observing one of the ladies of honour still more highly rouged than the Queen, he said, 'I suppose I look like a death's head upon a tombstone, among all these high-coloured furies.'

"The Queen again tried to interrupt the

Emperor, but he was not to be put out of countenance.

"He said he had no doubt, when he arrived at Brussels, that he should hear of the progress of his sister, the Arch-duchess Maria Christina, in her money negotiations with the banker Valkeers, who made a good stock for her husband's jobs.

"'If Maria Christina's gardens and palace at Lakin could speak,' observed he, 'what a spectacle of events would they not produce! What a number of fine sights my own family would afford!'

"'When I get to Cologne,' pursued the Emperor, 'there I shall see my great fat brother Maximilian, in his little electorate, spending his yearly revenue upon an ecclesiastical procession; for priests, like opposition, never bark but to get into the manger; never walk empty-handed; rosaries and good cheer always wind up their holy work; and my good Maximilian, as head of his Church, has scarcely feet to waddle into it. Feasting and fasting produce the same effect. In wind and food he is quite an adept—puffing, from one cause or the other, like a smith's bellows!'

"Indeed, the Elector of Cologne was really

grown so very fat, that, like his Imperial mother, he could scarcely walk. He would so over-eat himself at these ecclesiastical dinners, to make his guests welcome, that, from indigestion, he would be puffing and blowing, an hour afterwards, for breath!

"'As I have begun the family visits,' continued the Emperor, 'I must not pass by the Archduchess Mariana and the lady abbess at Clagenfurt; or, the Lord knows, I shall never hear the end of their *klagens*.[1] The first, I am told, is grown so ugly, and, of course, so neglected by mankind, that she is become an utter stranger to any attachment, excepting the fleshy embraces of the disgusting wen that encircles her neck and bosom, and makes her head appear like a black spot upon a large sheet of white paper! Therefore *klagen* is all I can expect from that quarter of female flesh, and I dare say it will be levelled against the whole race of mankind for their want of taste in not admiring her exuberance of human craw!

"'As to the lady abbess, she is one of my

1 A German word, which signifies *complaining*.

best recruiting serjeants. She is so fond of training cadets for the benefit of the army that they learn more from her system in one month than at the military academy at Neustadt in a whole year. She is her mother's own daughter. She understands military tactics thoroughly. She and I never quarrel, except when I garrison her citadel with invalids. She and the canoness, Mariana, would rather see a few young ensigns than all the staffs of the oldest field-marshals!'

"The Queen often made signs to the Emperor to desist from thus exposing every member of his family, and seemed to feel mortified; but the more Her Majesty endeavoured to check his freedom, and make him silent, the more he enlarged upon the subject. He did not even omit Maria Theresa, who, he said, in consequence of some papers found on persons arrested as spies from the Prussian camp, during the seven years' war, was reported to have been greatly surprised to have discovered that her husband, the Emperor Francis I., supplied the enemy's army with all kinds of provision from her stores.

"The King scarcely ever answered excepting

when the Emperor told the Queen that her staircase and ante-chamber at Versailles resembled more the Turkish bazars of Constantinople[1] than a royal palace. 'But,' added he, laughing, 'I suppose you would not allow the nuisance of hawkers and pedlars almost under your nose, if the sweet perfumes of a handsome present did not compensate for the disagreeable effluvia exhaling from their filthy traffic.'

"On this, Louis XVI., in a tone of voice somewhat varying from his usual mildness, assured the Emperor that neither himself nor the Queen derived any advantage from the custom, beyond the convenience of purchasing articles inside the palace at the moment they were wanted, without being forced to send for them elsewhere.

"'That is the very reason, my dear brother,' replied Joseph, 'why I would not allow these shops to be where they are. The temptation to lavish money to little purpose is too strong; and women have not philosophy enough to resist

1 It was an old custom, in the passages and staircase of all the royal palaces, for tradespeople to sell their merchandise for the accommodation of the Court.

having things they like, when they can be obtained easily, though they may not be wanted.'

"'Custom,' answered the King——

"'True,' exclaimed the Queen, interrupting him; 'custom, my dear brother, obliges us to tolerate in France many things which you, in Austria, have long since abolished; but the French are not to be treated like the Germans. A Frenchman is a slave to habit. His very caprice in the change of fashion, proceeds more from habit than genius or invention. His very restlessness of character is systematic; and old customs and national habits in a nation virtually *spirituelle* must not be trifled with. The tree torn up by the roots dies for want of nourishment; but, on the contrary, when lopped carefully only of its branches the pruning makes it more valuable to the cultivator and more pleasing to the beholder So it is with national prejudices, which are often but the excrescenses of national virtues. Root them out and you root out virtue and all. They must only be pruned and turned to profit. A Frenchman is more easily killed than subdued. Even his follies generally spring from a high

sense of national dignity and honour, which foreigners cannot but respect.'[1]

"The Emperor Joseph while in France mixed in all sorts of society to gain information with respect to the popular feeling towards his sister and instruction as to the manners and modes of life and thinking of the French. To this end he would often associate with the lowest of the common people, and generally gave them a louis for their loss of time in attending to him.

"One day, when he was walking with the young Princess Elizabeth and myself in the public gardens at Versailles and in deep conversation with us, two or three of these *louis* ladies came up to my side and, not knowing who I was, whispered, 'There's no use in paying such attention to the stranger: After all, when he has got what he wants, he'll only give you a louis a-piece and then send you about your business.'"

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1 Little did she think then that the nation she was eulogizing and so proud of governing would one day cause her to repent her partiality by barbarously dragging her to an ignominious trial and cruel death.

Note.

Thus far extend the anecdotes which the Princess Lamballe has recorded of the Emperor Joseph; but I cannot dismiss this part of the subject without noticing some mistakes which Madame Campan has admitted into her account of His Imperial Majesty and his visit.

Maria Antoinette, and not the Queen of Naples, was the Emperor's favourite. The Queen of Naples was the favourite of Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who succeeded the Emperor Joseph in a brief reign. This assertion is substantiated by the Queen of Naples herself, who could never persuade Joseph II. to allow the two marriages to take place between her two daughters and the present Emperor and his brother Ferdinand, the late Duke of Tuscany. On the contrary, he married the present Emperor, then King of the Romans, when very young, to his first wife, the Princess of Wirtemberg, sister to the Empress Dowager of Russia, to stop the continued importunities of his sister, the Queen of Naples, on that subject; but this Princess dying at Vienna only a few days previous to the death of the Emperor Joseph II., and Leopold succeeding, the marriages between Francis and Ferdinand and the daughters of the Queen of Naples took place soon after Leopold

assumed the imperial diadem, when Carolina and Ferdinand, her husband, the late King of Naples, accompanied both their daughters to their respective husbands.

Though Joseph II. freely acknowledged his sister Carolina's capacity for governing Naples, he was very much displeased at her instigating Pope Pius VI. to come to Vienna to remonstrate with him on the suppression of some of his religious houses. He avoided coming to any explanation with the holy father on this or any other subject by never seeing him but in public; and though the Pope resided for some months at Vienna, and travelled to that city from the ancient Christian capital of the world for no other purpose, yet His Holiness was unable to get a sight of the Emperor except at public levee days, and was obliged to return to Rome with the mortification of having humiliated himself by an utterly fruitless journey.

When Joseph II. had been informed that the Queen of Naples had expressed herself hostile to his innovations, he told her Ambassador, "*Tutti son padroni a casa sua.*"

From these circumstances I think it seems pretty evident that Madame Campan has been led into an error when she says that Joseph II. and the Queen of Naples idolised each other. The very reverse is the fact; but it was their mutual interest to keep up

political appearances from the two extreme situations they held in Italy.

It was Joseph II., on his leaving Italy and coming to Paris, who interested himself with his favourite sister, the Queen of France, to cause the King, her husband, to settle the differences then subsisting between the Court of Naples and that of Spain; and it was his opinion which some time afterwards influenced the Queen of France to refuse the offer of the Queen of Naples to affiance her daughter, the present Duchess D'Angoulême, to the Crown Prince, son of the Queen of Naples, and to propose as more eligible a marriage which, since the Revolution, *has* taken place between the house of Orleans and that of Naples.

I know not whether the individuals since united are the same who were then proposed, but the union of the houses was certainly suggested by Maria Antoinette, with the consent of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, with whom, or rather with the last of whom, the Queen of France was then upon terms of intimacy.

CHAPTER IX

JOURNAL CONTINUED—PLEASURE OF HEARING OF THE BIRTH OF CHILDREN—THE QUEEN'S EXULTATION AT FINDING HERSELF PREGNANT—FAVOURABLE CHANGE IN THE PUBLIC SENTIMENT—THE KING'S AUNTS ANNOYED AT THE QUEEN'S PROSPERITY—HER PREGNANCY ASCRIBED BY DU BARRY TO D'ARTOIS—LAMBALLE INTERFERES TO PREVENT A PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN THE QUEEN AND BARON BESENVAL—COOLNESS IN CONSEQUENCE—THE INTERVIEW GRANTED, AND THE RESULT AS FEARED—THE QUEEN SENSIBLE OF HER ERROR—THE POLIGNACS—NIGHT PROMENADES ON THE TERRACE AT VERSAILLES AND AT TRIANON—QUEEN'S REMARK ON HEARING OF DU BARRY'S INTRIGUE AGAINST HER—PRINCESS LAMBALLE DECLINES GOING TO THE EVENING PROMENADES—VERMOND STRENGTHENS MARIA ANTOINETTE'S HATRED OF ETIQUETTE—HER GOODNESS OF HEART—DROLL ANECDOTE OF THE CHEVALIER D'EON

"I REMEMBER an old lady who could not bear to be told of deaths. 'Psha! Pshaw!' she would exclaim. 'Bring me no tales of funerals! Talk of births and of those who are likely to be blest with them! These are the joys which gladden old hearts and fill youthful ones with

ecstasy! It is our own reproduction in children which makes us quit the world happy and contented; because then we only retire to make room for another race, bringing with them all those faculties which are in us decayed; and capable, which we ourselves have ceased to be, of taking our parts and figuring on the stage of life so long as it may please the Supreme Manager to busy them in earthly scenes!—Then talk no more to me of weeds and mourning, but show me christenings and all those who give employ to the baptismal font!'

"Such also was the exulting feeling of Maria Antoinette when she no longer doubted of her wished-for pregnancy. The idea of becoming a mother filled her soul with an exuberant delight, which made the very pavement on which she trod vibrate with the words 'I shall be a mother! I shall be a mother!' She was so overjoyed that she not only made it public throughout France but despatches were sent off to all her royal relatives. And was not her rapture natural? so long as she had waited for the result of every youthful union, and so coarsely as she had been

reproached with her misfortune! Now came her triumph. She could now prove to the world, like all the descendants of the house of Austria, that there was no defect with her. The satirists and the malevolent were silenced. Louis XVI., from the cold, insensible bridegroom, became the infatuated admirer of his long-neglected wife. The enthusiasm with which the event was hailed by all France atoned for the partial insults she had received before it. The splendid fêtes, balls, and entertainments, indiscriminately lavished by all ranks throughout the kingdom on this occasion, augmented those of the Queen and the Court to a pitch of magnificence surpassing the most luxurious and voluptuous times of the great and brilliant Louis XIV. Entertainments were given even to the domestics of every description belonging to the royal establishments. Indeed, so general was the joy that, among those who could do no more, there could scarcely be found a father or mother in France who, before they took their wine, did not first offer up a prayer for the prosperous pregnancy of their beloved Queen.

"And yet, though the situation of Maria

Antoinette was now become the theme of a whole nation's exultation, she herself, the owner of the precious burthen, selected by Heaven as its special depositary, was the only one censured for expressing all her happiness!

"Those models of decorum, the *virtuous* Princesses, her aunts, deemed it highly indelicate in Her Majesty to have given public marks of her satisfaction to those deputed to compliment her on her prosperous situation. To avow the joy she felt was in their eyes indecent and unqueenly. Where was the shrinking bashfulness of *that one* of these Princesses who had herself been so clamorous to Louis XV. against her husband, the Duke of Modena, for not having consummated her own marriage?

"The party of the dismissed favourite Du Barry were still working underground. Their pestiferous vapours issued from the recesses of the earth, to obscure the brightness of the rising sun, which was now rapidly towering to its climax, to obliterate the little planets which had once endeavoured to eclipse its beautiful rays, but were now incapable of competition, and unable to

endure its lustre. This malignant nest of serpents began to poison the minds of the courtiers, as soon as the pregnancy was obvious, by inuendos on the partiality of the Count d'Artois for the Queen; and at length, infamously, and openly, dared to point him out as the cause!

"Thus, in the heart of the Court itself, originated this most atrocious slander, long before it reached the nation, and so much assisted to destroy Her Majesty's popularity with a people, who now adored her amiableness, her general kind-heartedness, and her unbounded charity.

"I have repeatedly seen the Queen and the Count d'Artois together under circumstances in which there could have been no concealment of her real feelings; and I can firmly and boldly assert the falsehood of this allegation against my royal mistress. The only attentions Maria Antoinette received in the earlier part of her residence in France were from her grandfather and her brothers-in-law. Of these, the Count d'Artois was the only one who, from youth and liveliness of character, thoroughly sympathised with his sister. But, beyond the little freedoms of two

young and innocent playmates, nothing can be charged upon their intimacy; no familiarity whatever farther than was warranted by their relationship. I can bear witness that Her Majesty's attachment for the Count d'Artois never differed in its nature from what she felt for her brother the Emperor Joseph.[1]

"It is very likely that the slander of which I speak, derived some colour of probability afterwards with the million, from the Queen's thoughtlessness, relative to the challenge which passed between the Count d'Artois and the Duke de Bourbon. In right of my station, I was one of Her Majesty's confidential counsellors, and it became my duty to put restraint upon her inclinations, whenever I conceived they led her wrong.

1 When the King thought proper to be reconciled to the Queen after the death of his grandfather, Louis XV., and that she became a mother, she really was very much attached to Louis XVI., as may be proved from her never quitting him, and suffering all the horrid sacrifices she endured, through the whole period of the Revolution, rather than leave her husband, her children, or her sister. Maria Antoinette might have saved her life twenty times, had not the King's safety, united with her own and that of her family, impelled her to reject every proposition of self-preservation.

In this instance, I exercised my prerogative decidedly, and even so much so as to create displeasure; but I anticipated the consequences, which actually ensued, and preferred to risk my royal mistress's displeasure rather than her reputation. The dispute, which led to the duel, was on some point of etiquette; and the Baron de Besenval was to attend as second to one of the parties. From the Queen's attachment for her royal brother, she wished the affair to be amicably arranged, without the knowledge either of the King, who was ignorant of what had taken place, or of the parties; which could only be effected by her seeing the baron in the most private manner. I opposed Her Majesty's allowing any interview with the baron upon any terms, unless sanctioned by the King. This unexpected and peremptory refusal obliged the Queen to transfer her confidence to the librarian, who introduced the baron into one of the private apartments of Her Majesty's women, communicating with that of the Queen, where Her Majesty could see the baron without the exposure of passing any of the other attendants. The baron was quite gray, and

upwards of sixty years of age! But the self-conceited dotard soon caused the Queen to repent her misplaced confidence, and from his unwarrantable impudence on that occasion, when he found himself alone with the Queen, Her Majesty, though he was a constant member of the societies of the Polignacs, ever after treated him with sovereign contempt.

"The Queen herself afterwards described to me the baron's presumptuous attack upon her credulity. From this circumstance I thenceforward totally excluded him from my parties, where Her Majesty was always a regular visitor.

"The coolness to which my determination not to allow the interview gave rise between Her Majesty and myself was but momentary. The Queen had too much discernment not to appreciate the basis upon which my denial was grounded, even before she was convinced by the result how correct had been my reflections. She felt her error, and, by the mediation of the Duke of Dorset, we were reunited more closely than ever, and so, I trust, we shall remain till death!

"There was much more attempted to be made

of another instance, in which I exercised the duty of my office, than the truth justified—the nightly promenades on the terrace at Versailles, or at Trianon. Though no amusement could have been more harmless or innocent for a private individual, yet I certainly disapproved of it for a queen, and therefore withheld the sanction of my attendance. My sole objection was on the score of dignity. I well knew that Du Barry and her infamous party were constant spies upon the Queen on every occasion of such a nature; and that they would not fail to exaggerate her every movement to her prejudice. Though Du Barry could not form one of the party, which was a great source of heart-burning, it was easy for her, under the circumstances, to mingle with the throng. When I suggested these objections to the Queen, Her Majesty, feeling no inward cause of reproach, and being sanctioned in what she did by the King himself, laughed at the idea of these little excursions affording food for scandal. I assured Her Majesty that I had every reason to be convinced that Du Barry was often in disguise not far from the seat where Her Majesty and the Princess

Elizabeth could be overheard in their most secret conversations with each other. 'Listeners,' replied the Queen, 'never hear any good of themselves.'

"'My dear Lamballe,' she continued, 'you have taken such a dislike to this woman that you cannot conceive she can be occupied but in mischief. This is uncharitable. She certainly has no reason to be dissatisfied with either the King or myself. We have both left her in the full enjoyment of all she possessed except the right of appearing at Court or continuing in the society her conduct had too long disgraced.'

"I said it was very true, but that I should be happier to find Her Majesty so scrupulous as never to give an opportunity even for the falsehoods of her enemies.

"Her Majesty turned the matter off, as usual, by saying she had no idea of injuring others, and could not believe that anyone would wantonly injure her, adding, 'The Duchess and the Princess Elizabeth, my two sisters, and all the other ladies, are coming to hear the concert this evening, and you will be delighted.'

"I excused myself under the plea of the night

air disagreeing with my health, and returned to Versailles without ever making myself one of the nocturnal members of Her Majesty's society, well knowing she could dispense with my presence, there being more than enough ever ready to hurry her by their own imprudence into the folly of despising criticisms, which I always endeavoured to avoid, though I did not fear them. Of these I cannot but consider her secretary as one. The following circumstance connected with the promenades is a proof:

"The Abbé Vermond was present one day when Maria Antoinette observed that she felt rather indisposed. I attributed it to Her Majesty's having lightened her dress and exposed herself too much to the night air. 'Heavens, madame!' cried the Abbé, 'would you always have Her Majesty cased up in steel armour and not take the fresh air without being surrounded by a troop of horse and foot, as a field-marshal is when going to storm a fortress? Pray, Princess, now that Her Majesty has freed herself from the annoying shackles of Madame Etiquette (the Countess de Noailles), let her enjoy the pleasure

of a simple robe and breathe freely the fresh morning dew, as has been her custom all her life (and as her mother before her, the Empress Maria Theresa, has done and continues to do, even to this day), unfettered by antiquated absurdities! Let me be anything rather than a Queen of France, if I must be doomed to the slavery of such tyrannical rules!'

"'True; but, sir,' replied I, 'you should reflect that if you were a Queen of France, France, in making you mistress of her destinies, and placing you at the head of her nation, would in return look for respect from you to her customs and manners. I am born an Italian, but I renounced all national peculiarities of thinking and acting the moment I set my foot on French ground.'

"'And so did I,' said Maria Antoinette.

"'I know you did, madame,' I answered; 'but I am replying to your preceptor; and I only wish he saw things in the same light I do. *When we are at Rome, we should do as Rome does.* You have never had a regicide Bertrand de Gurdon, a Ravillac, or a Damiens in Germany;

but they have been common in France, and the sovereigns of France cannot be too circumspect in their maintenance of ancient etiquette to command the dignified respect of a frivolous and versatile people.'

"The Queen, though she did not strictly adhere to my counsels or the Abbé's advice, had too much good sense to allow herself to be prejudiced against me by her preceptor; but the Abbé never entered on the propriety or impropriety of the Queen's conduct before me, and from the moment I have mentioned studiously avoided, in my presence, anything which could lead to discussion on the change of dress and amusements introduced by Her Majesty.

"Although I disapproved of Her Majesty's deviations from established forms in this, or, indeed, any respect, yet I never, before or after, expressed my opinion before a third person.

"Never should I have been so firmly and so long attached to Maria Antoinette, had I not known that her native thorough goodness of heart had been warped and misguided, though acting at the same time with the best intentions,

by a false notion of her real innocence being a sufficient shield against the public censure of such innovations upon national prejudices, as she thought proper to introduce; the fatal error of conscious rectitude, encouraged in its regardlessness of appearances by those very persons who well knew that it is only by appearances a nation can judge of its rulers.

"I remember a ludicrous circumstance arising from the Queen's innocent curiosity, in which, if there were anything to blame, I myself am to be censured for lending myself to it so heartily to satisfy Her Majesty.

"When the Chevalier d'Eon was allowed to return to France, Her Majesty expressed a particular inclination to see this extraordinary character. From prudential as well as political motives, she was at first easily persuaded to repress her desire. However, by a most ludicrous occurrence, it was revived, and nothing would do but she must have a sight of the being who had for some time been the talk of every society, and at the period to which I allude was become the mirth of all Paris.

"The Chevalier being one day in a very large party of both sexes, in which, though his appearance had more of the old soldier in it than of the character he was compelled *malgré lui*[1] to adopt, many of the guests having no idea to what sex this nondescript animal really belonged, the conversation after dinner happened to turn on the manly exercise of fencing. Heated by a subject to him so interesting, the Chevalier, forgetful of the respect due to his assumed garb, started from his seat, and pulling up his petticoats, threw himself on guard. Though dressed in male attire underneath, this sudden freak sent all the ladies and many of the gentlemen out of the room in double quick time. The Chevalier, however, instantly recovering from the first impulse, quietly put down his upper garment, and begged pardon in a gentlemanly manner for having for a moment deviated from the forms of his imposed situation.

1 It may be necessary to observe here that the Chevalier, having from some particular motives been banished from France, was afterward permitted to return only on condition of never appearing but in the disguised dress of a female, though he was always habited in the male costume underneath it.

All the gossips of Paris were presently amused with the story, which, of course, reached the Court, with every droll particular of the pulling up and clapping down the cumbrous paraphernalia of a hoop petticoat.

"The King and Queen, from the manner in which they enjoyed the tale when told them (and certainly it lost nothing in the report), would not have been the least amused of the party had they been present. His Majesty shook the room with laughing, and the Queen, the Princess Elizabeth, and the other ladies were convulsed at the description.

"When we were alone, 'How I should like,' said the Queen, 'to see this curious man-woman!' 'Indeed,' replied I, 'I have not less curiosity than yourself, and I think we may contrive to let Your Majesty have a peep at him—her, I mean!—without compromising your dignity, or offending the minister who interdicted the Chevalier from appearing in your presence. I know he has expressed the greatest mortification, and that his wish to see Your Majesty is almost irrepressible.'

"'But how will you be able to contrive this

without its being known to the King, or to the Count de Vergennes, who would never forgive me?' exclaimed Her Majesty.

"'Why, on Sunday, when you go to chapel, I will cause him, by some means or other, to make his appearance, *en grande costume*, among the group of ladies who are generally waiting there to be presented to Your Majesty.'

"'Oh, you charming creature!' said the Queen. 'But won't the minister banish or exile him for it?'

"'No, no! He has only been forbidden an audience of Your Majesty at Court,' I replied.

"'In good earnest, on the Sunday following, the Chevalier was dressed *en costume*, with a large hoop, very long train, sack, five rows of ruffles, an immensely high powdered female wig, very beautiful lappets, white gloves, an elegant fan in his hand, his beard closely shaved, his neck and ears adorned with diamond rings and necklaces, and assuming all the airs and graces of a fine lady!

"But, unluckily, his anxiety was so great, the moment the Queen made her appearance, to get a sight of Her Majesty, that, on rushing before

the other ladies, his wig and head-dress fell off his head; and, before they could be well replaced, he made so ridiculous a figure, by clapping them, in his confusion, hind part before, that the King, the Queen, and the whole suite, could scarcely refrain from laughing aloud in the church.

"Thus ended the long longed-for sight of this famous man-woman!

"As to me, it was a great while before I could recover myself. Even now, I laugh whenever I think of this great lady deprived of her head ornaments, with her bald pate laid bare, to the derision of such a multitude of Parisians, always prompt to divert themselves at the expense of others. However, the affair passed off unheeded, and no one but the Queen and myself ever knew that we ourselves had been innocently the cause of this comical adventure. When we met after Mass, we were so overpowered, that neither of us could speak for laughing. The bishop who officiated, said it was lucky he had no sermon to preach that day, for it would have been difficult for him to have recollected himself, or to have maintained his gravity. The ridiculous appearance

of the Chevalier, he added, was so continually presenting itself before him during the service that it was as much as he could do to restrain himself from laughing, by keeping his eyes constantly riveted on the book. Indeed, the oddity of the affair was greatly heightened when, in the middle of the Mass, some charitable hand having adjusted the wig of the Chevalier, he re-entered the chapel as if nothing had happened, and, placing himself exactly opposite the altar, with his train upon his arm, stood fanning himself, *à la coquette*, with an inflexible self-possession which only rendered it the more difficult for those around him to maintain their composure.

"Thus ended the Queen's curiosity. The result only made the Chevalier's company in greater request, for everyone became more anxious than ever to know the masculine lady who had lost her wig!"

CHAPTER X

OBSERVATIONS OF THE EDITOR—*JOURNAL CONTINUED*—BIRTH OF THE DUCHESS D'ANGOULÊME — MARIA ANTOINETTE DELIVERED OF A DAUPHIN—INCREASING INFLUENCE OF THE DUCHESS DE POLIGNAC — THE ABBÉ VERMOND HEADS AN INTRIGUE AGAINST IT—POLIGNAC MADE GOVERNESS OF THE ROYAL CHILDREN —HER SPLENDOUR AND INCREASING UNPOPULARITY—ENVY AND RESENTMENT OF THE NOBILITY—BIRTH OF THE DUKE OF NORMANDY—THE QUEEN ACCOMPLISHES THE MARRIAGE OF THE DUCHESS DE POLIGNAC'S DAUGHTER WITH THE DUKE DE GUICHE—CABALS OF THE COURT — MARIA ANTOINETTE'S PARTIALITY FOR THE ENGLISH—LIBELS ON THE QUEEN—PRIVATE COMMISSIONS TO SUPPRESS THEM — MOTIVES OF THE DUKE DE LAUZUN FOR JOINING THE CALUMNIATORS—DROLL CONVERSATION BETWEEN MARIA ANTOINETTE, LADY SPENCER, THE DUKE OF DORSET, ETC., AT VERSAILLES — INTERESTING VISIT OF THE GRAND DUKE OF THE NORTH (AFTERWARDS THE EMPEROR PAUL) AND HIS DUCHESS — MARIA ANTOINETTE'S DISGUST AT THE KING OF SWEDEN — AUDACITY OF THE CARDINAL DE ROHAN

FROM the time that the Princess Lamballe saw the ties between the Queen and her favourite Polignac drawing closer she became less assiduous

in her attendance at Court, being reluctant to importune the friends by her presence at an intimacy which she did not approve. She could not, however, withhold her accustomed attentions, as the period of Her Majesty's accouchement approached; and she has thus noted the circumstance of the birth of the Duchess d'Angoulême, on the 19th of December, 1778.

"The moment for the accomplishment of the Queen's darling hope was now at hand: she was about to become a mother.

"It had been agreed between Her Majesty and myself, that I was to place myself so near the accoucheur, Vermond,[1] as to be the first to distinguish the sex of the new-born infant, and if she should be delivered of a Dauphin to say, in Italian, *Il figlio è nato.*

"Her Majesty was, however, foiled even in this the most blissful of her desires. She was delivered of a daughter instead of a Dauphin.

"From the immense crowd that burst into

1 Brother to the Abbé, whose pride was so great at this honour conferred on his relative, that he never spoke of him without denominating him *Monsieur mon frère, l'accoucher de sa Majesté, Vermond.*

the apartment the instant Vermond said, *The Queen is happily delivered*, Her Majesty was nearly suffocated. I had hold of her hand, and as I said *La regina è andato*, mistaking *andato* for *nato*, between the joy of giving birth to a son and the pressure of the crowd, Her Majesty fainted. Overcome by the dangerous situation in which I saw my royal mistress I myself was carried out of the room in a lifeless state. The situation of Her Majesty was for some time very doubtful till the people were dragged with violence from about her, that she might have air. On her recovering, the King was the first person who told her that she was the mother of a very fine Princess.

"'Well, then,' said the Queen, 'I am like my mother, for at my birth she also wished for a son instead of a daughter; and you have lost your wager': for the King had betted with Maria Theresa that it would be a son.

"The King answered her by repeating the lines Metastasio had written on that occasion:

Io perdei: l'augusta figlia
A pagar, m'a condemnato;
Ma s'è ver che a voi somiglia
Tutto il mondo ha guadagnato."

The Princess Lamballe again ceased to be constantly about the Queen. Her danger was over, she was a mother, and the attentions of disinterested friendship were no longer indispensable. She herself about this time met with a deep affliction. She lost both of her own parents; and to her sorrows may, in a great degree, be ascribed her silence upon the events which intervened between the birth of Madame and that of the Dauphin. She was as assiduous as ever in her attentions to Her Majesty on her second lying-in. The circumstances of the death of Maria Theresa, the Queen's mother, in the interval which divided the two accouchements, and Her Majesty's anguish, and refusal to see any but Lamballe and Polignac, are too well-known to detain us longer from the notes of the Princess. It is enough for the reader to know that the friendship of Her Majesty for her superintendent seemed to be gradually reviving in all its early enthusiasm, by her unremitting kindness during the confinements of the Queen; till, at length, they became more attached than ever. But, not to anticipate, let me return to the narrative.

"The public feeling had undergone a great change with respect to Her Majesty from the time of her first accouchement. Still, she was not the mother of a future King. The people looked upon her as belonging to them more than she had done before, and faction was silenced by the general delight. But she had not yet attained the climax of her felicity. A second pregnancy gave a new excitement to the nation; and, at length, on the 22nd October, 1781, dawned the day of hope.

"In consequence of what happened on the first accouchement, measures were taken to prevent similar disasters on the second. The number admitted into the apartment was circumscribed. The silence observed left the Queen in uncertainty of the sex to which she had given birth, till, with tears of joy, the King said to her—'Madame, the hopes of the nation, and mine, are fulfilled. You are the mother of a Dauphin.'

"The Princess Elizabeth and myself were so overjoyed that we embraced everyone in the room.

"At this time Their Majesties were adored

Maria Antoinette, with all her beauty and amiableness, was a mere cipher in the eyes of France previous to her becoming the mother of an heir to the Crown; but her popularity now arose to a pitch of unequalled enthusiasm.

"I have heard of but one expression to Her Majesty upon this occasion in any way savouring of discontent. This came from the royal aunts. On Maria Antoinette's expressing to them her joy in having brought a Dauphin to the nation, they replied, 'We will only repeat our father's observation on a similar subject. When one of our sisters complained to his late Majesty that, as her Italian husband had copied the Dauphin's whim, she could not, though long a bride, boast of being a wife, or hope to become a mother'—'a prudent Princess,' replied Louis XV., 'never wants heirs!' But the feeling of the royal aunts was an exception to the general sentiment, which really seemed like madness.

"I remember a proof of this which happened at the time. Chancing to cross the King's path as he was going to Marly and I coming from Rambouillet, my two postillions jumped from their

horses, threw themselves on the high road upon their knees, though it was very dirty, and remained there, offering up their benedictions, till he was out of sight.[1]

"The felicity of the Queen was too great not to be soon overcast. The unbounded influence of the Polignacs was now at its zenith. It could not fail of being attacked. Every engine of malice, envy, and detraction was let loose; and in the vilest calumnies against the character of the Duchess, her Royal mistress was included.

"It was, in truth, a most singular fatality in the life of Maria Antoinette that she could do nothing, however beneficial or disinterested, for which she was not either criticised or censured. She had a tenacity of character which made her cling more closely to attachments from which she saw others desirous of estranging her; and this firmness, however excellent in principle, was, in her case, fatal in its effects. The Abbé Vermond, Her Majesty's confessor and tutor, and, unfor-

1 These very men, perhaps, but a short time after, were among the regicides who caused him to be butchered on the scaffold!—What a lesson for Princes!

tunately, in many respects, her ambitious guide, was really alarmed at the rising favour of the Duchess; and though he knew the very obstacles thrown in her way only strengthened her resolution as to any favourite object, yet he ventured to head an intrigue to destroy the great influence of the Polignacs, which, as he might have foreseen, only served to hasten their aggrandisement.

"At this crisis the dissipation of the Duke de Guémenée caused him to become a bankrupt.—I know not whether it can be said in principle, but certainly it may in property, 'It is an ill wind that blows no one any good.' The Princess, his wife, having been obliged to leave her residence at Versailles, in consequence of the Duke's dismissal from the King's service on account of the disordered state of his pecuniary circumstances the situation of governess to the royal children became necessarily vacant, and was immediately transferred to the Duchess de Polignac. The Queen, to enable her friend to support her station with all the éclat suitable to its dignity, took care to supply ample means from her own private purse. A most magnificent suite of apartments

was ordered tc be arranged, under the immediate inspection of the Queen's maitre d'hotel, at Her Majesty's expense.

"Is there anything on earth more natural than the lively interest which inspires a mother towards those who have the care of her offspring? What then, must have been the feelings of a Queen of France who had been deprived of that blessing for which connubial attachments are formed, and which, *vice versâ*, constitutes the only real happiness of every young female.—What must have been, I say, the ecstasy of Maria Antoinette when she not only found herself a mother, but the dear pledges of all her future bliss in the hands of one whose friendship allowed her the unrestrained exercise of maternal affection: a climax of felicity combining not only the pleasures of an ordinary mother, but the greatness, the dignity, and the flattering popularity of a Queen of France.

"Though the pension of the Duchess de Polignac was no more than that usually allotted to all former governesses of the royal children of France, yet circumstances tempted her to a display not a little injurious to her popularity as well as

to that of her royal mistress. She gave too many pretexts to imputations of extravagance. Yet she had neither patronage, nor sinecures, nor immunities beyond the few inseparable from the office she held, and which had been the same for centuries under the Monarchy of France. But it must be remembered, as an excuse for the splendour of her establishment, that she entered her office upon a footing very different from that of any of her predecessors. Her mansion was not the quiet, retired, simple household of the governess of the royal children, as formerly: it had become the magnificent resort of the first Queen in Europe; the daily haunt of Her Majesty. The Queen certainly visited the former governess, as she had done the Duchess de Duras and many other frequenters of her Court parties; but she made the Duchess de Polignac's her Court; and all the courtiers of that Court, and I may say, the great personages of all France, as well as the ministers and all foreigners of distinction, held there their usual rendezvous; consequently, there was nothing wanting but the guards in attendance in the Queen's apartments to have made it a royal

residence suitable for the reception of the illustrious personages that were in the constant habit of visiting these levees, assemblies, balls, routs, picnics, dinner, supper, and card parties.[1]

"Much as some of the higher classes of the nobility felt aggrieved at the preference given by

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1 I have seen ladies at the Princess Lamballe's come from these card parties with their laps so blackened by the quantities of gold received in them, that they have been obliged to change their dresses to go to supper. Many a *chevalier d'industrie* and young military spendthrift has made his harvest here. Thousands were won and lost, and the ladies were generally the dupes of all those who were the constant speculative attendants. The Princess Lamballe did not like play, but when it was necessary she did play, and won or lost to a limited extent; but the prescribed sum once exhausted or gained she left off. In set parties, such as those of whist, she never played except when one was wanted, often excusing herself on the score of its requiring more attention than it was in her power to give to it and her reluctance to sacrifice her partner; though I have heard *Beau* Dillon, the Duke of Dorset, Lord Edward Dillon, and many others say that she understood and played the game much better than many who had a higher opinion of their skill in it. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was admitted to the parties at the Duchess de Polignac's on his first coming to Paris; but when his connection with the Duke of Orleans and Madame de Genlis became known he was informed that his society would be dispensed with. The famous, or rather the infamous, Beckford was also excluded.

the Queen to the Duchess de Polignac, that which raised against Her Majesty the most implacable resentment was her frequenting the parties of her favourite more than those of any other of the *haut ton*. These assemblies, from the situation held by the Duchess, could not always be the most select. Many of the guests who chanced to get access to them from a mere glimpse of the Queen—whose general good humour, vivacity, and constant wish to please all around her would often make her commit herself unconsciously and unintentionally—would fabricate anecdotes of things they had neither seen nor heard; and which never had existence, except in their own wicked imaginations. The scene of the inventions, circulated against Her Majesty through France, was, in consequence, generally placed at the Duchess's; but they were usually so distinctly and obviously false that no notice was taken of them, nor was any attempt made to check their promulgation.

"Exemplary as was the friendship between this enthusiastic pair, how much more fortunate for both would it have been had it never happened! I foresaw the results long, long before

they took place; but the Queen was not to be thwarted. Fearful she might attribute my anxiety for her general safety to unworthy personal views, I was often silent, even when duty bade me speak. I was, perhaps, too scrupulous about seeming officious or jealous of the predilection shown to the Duchess. Experience had taught me the inutility of representing consequences, and I had no wish to quarrel with the Queen. Indeed, there was a degree of coldness towards me on the part of Her Majesty for having gone so far as I had done. It was not till after the birth of the Duke of Normandy, her third child, in March, 1785, that her friendship resumed its primitive warmth.

"As the children grew, Her Majesty's attachment for their governess grew with them. All that has been said of Tasso's *Armida* was nothing to this luxurious temple of maternal affection. Never was female friendship more strongly cemented, or less disturbed by the nauseous poison of envy, malice, or mean jealousy. The Queen was in the plenitude of every earthly enjoyment, from being able to see and contribute to the education

of the children she tenderly loved, unrestrained by the gothic etiquette, with which all former royal mothers had been fettered, but which the kind indulgence of the Duchess de Polignac broke through, as unnatural and unworthy of the enlightened and affectionate. The Duchess was herself an attentive, careful mother. She felt for the Queen, and encouraged her maternal sympathies, so doubly endeared by the long, long disappointment which had preceded their gratification. The sacrifice of all the cold forms of state policy by the new governess, and the free access she gave the royal mother to her children, so unprecedented in the Court of France, rendered Maria Antoinette so grateful that it may justly be said she divided her heart between the governess and the governed. Habit soon made it necessary for her existence that she should dedicate the whole of her time, not taken up in public ceremonies or parties, to the cultivation of the minds of her children. Conscious of her own deficiency in this respect, she determined to redeem this error in her offspring. The love of the frivolous amusements of society, for which the

want of higher cultivation left room in her mind, was humoured by the gaieties of the Duchess de Polignac's assemblies; while her nobler dispositions were encouraged by the privileges of the favourite's station. Thus, all her inclinations harmonising with the habits and position of her friend, Maria Antoinette literally passed the greatest part of some years in company with the Duchess de Polignac; either amidst the glare and bustle of public recreation, or in the private apartment of the governess and her children, increasing as much as possible the kindness of the one for the benefit and comfort of the others. The attachment of the Duchess to the royal children was returned by the Queen's affection for the offspring of the Duchess. So much was Her Majesty interested in favour of the daughter of the Duchess, that, before that young lady was fifteen years of age, she herself contrived and accomplished her marriage with the Duke de Guiche, then maitre de cérémonie to Her Majesty, and whose interests were essentially promoted by this alliance.[1]

1 The Duke de Guiche, since Duke de Grammont, has proved how much he merited the distinctions he received,

"The great cabals, which agitated the Court in consequence of the favour shown to the Polignacs, were not slow in declaring themselves. The Countess de Noailles was one of the foremost among the discontented. Her resignation, upon the appointment of a superintendent, was a sufficient evidence of her real feeling; but when she now saw a place filled, to which she conceived her family had a claim, her displeasure could not be silent, and her dislike to the Queen began to express itself without reserve.

"Another source of dissatisfaction against the

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in consequence of the attachment between the Queen and his mother-in-law, by the devotedness with which he followed the fallen fortunes of the Bourbons till their restoration, since which he has not been forgotten. The Duchess, his wife, who at her marriage was beaming with all the beauties of her age, and adorned by art and nature with every accomplishment, though she came into notice at a time when the Court had scarcely recovered itself from the debauched morals by which it had been so long degraded by a Pompadour and a Du Barry, has yet preserved her character, by the strictness of her conduct, free from the censorious criticisms of an epoch in which some of the purest could not escape unassailed. I saw her at Pyrmont in 1803; and even then, though the mother of many children, she looked as young and beautiful as ever. She was remarkably well educated and accomplished, a profound musician on the harp and pianoforte, graceful in her conversation, and a most charming dancer. She seemed to bear the vicissi-

Queen was her extreme partiality for the English. After the peace of Versailles, in 1783, the English flocked into France, and I believe if a poodle dog had come from England it would have met with a good reception from Her Majesty. This was natural enough. The American war had been carried on entirely against her wish; though, from the influence she was supposed to exercise in the cabinet, it was presumed to have been managed entirely by herself. This odious opinion she wished personally to destroy; and it could only be done by the distinction with which, after the peace, she treated the whole English nation.[1]

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tudes of fortune with a philosophical courage and resignation not often to be met with in light-headed French women. She was amiable in her manners, easy of access, always lively and cheerful, and enthusiastically attached to the country whence she was then excluded. She constantly accompanied the wife of the late Louis XVIII. during her travels in Germany, as her husband the Duke did His Majesty during his residence at Mittau, in Courland, &c. I have had the honour of seeing the Duke twice since the Revolution; once, on my coming from Russia, at General Binkingdroff's, Governor of Mittau, and since, in Portland Place, at the French Ambassador's, on his coming to England in the name of his sovereign, to congratulate the King of England on his accession to the throne.

1 The daughter of the Duchess de Polignac (of my meeting with whom I have already spoken in a note).

"Several of the English nobility were on a familiar footing at the parties of the Duchess de Polignac. This was quite enough for the slanderers. They were all ranked, and that publicly, as lovers of Her Majesty. I recollect when there were no less than five different private commissioners out, to suppress the libels that were in

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entering with me upon the subject of France and of old times, observed that had the Queen limited her attachment to the person of her mother, she would not have given all the annoyance which she did, to the nobility. It was to these partialities to the English, the Duchess de Guiche Grammont alluded. I do not know the lady's name distinctly, but I am certain I have heard the beautiful Lady Sarah Bunbury mentioned by the Princess Lamballe as having received particular attention from the Queen; for the Princess had heard much about this lady and "a certain great personage" in England; but, on discovering her acquaintance with the Duke of Lauzun, Her Majesty withdrew from the intimacy, though not soon enough to prevent its having given food for scandal. "You must remember," added the Duchess de Guiche Grammont, "how much the Queen was censured for her enthusiasm about Lady Spencer." I replied that I did remember the *much-ado about nothing* there was regarding some English lady, to whom the Queen took a liking, whose name I could not exactly recall; but I knew well she studied to please the English in general. Of this Lady Spencer it is that the Princess speaks in one of the following pages of this chapter.

circulation over all France, against the Queen and Lord Edward Dillon, the Duke of Dorset, Lord George Conway, Arthur Dillon, as well as Count Fersen, the Duke de Lauzun, and the Count d'Artois, who were all not only constant frequenters of Polignac's but visitors of Maria Antoinette.

"By the false policy of Her Majesty's advisers, these enemies and libellers, instead of being brought to the condign punishment their infamy deserved, were privately hushed into silence, out of delicacy to the Queen's feelings, by large sums of money and pensions, which encouraged numbers to commit the same enormity in the hope of obtaining the same recompense.

"But these were mercenary wretches, from whom no better could have been expected. A legitimate mode of robbery had been pressed upon their notice by the Government itself, and they thought it only a matter of fair speculation to make the best of it. There were some libellers, however, of a higher order, in comparison with whose motives for slander, those of the mere scandal-jobbers were white as the driven snow.

Of these, one of the worst was the Duke de Lauzun.

"The first motive of the Queen's strong dislike to the Duke de Lauzun sprang from Her Majesty's attachment to the Duchess of Orleans, whom she really loved. She was greatly displeased at the injury inflicted upon her valued friend by Lauzun, in estranging the affection of the Duke of Orleans from his wife by introducing him to depraved society. Among the associates to which this connection led the Duke of Orleans were a certain Madame Duthée and Madame Buffon.

"When Lauzun, after having been expelled from the drawing-room of the Queen for his insolent presumption,[1] meeting with coolness at the King's levee, sought to cover his disgrace by appearing at the assemblies of the Duchess de Polignac, her grace was too sincerely the friend of her sovereign and benefactress not to perceive the drift of his conduct. She consequently signified to the self-sufficient coxcomb that her assemblies were not open to the public. Being thus shut out from Their Majesties, and, as a natural result,

1 The allusion here is to the affair of the heron plume.

excluded from the most brilliant societies of Paris, Lauzun, from a most diabolical spirit of revenge, joined the nefarious party which had succeeded in poisoning the mind of the Duke of Orleans, and from the hordes of which, like the burning lava from Etna, issued calumnies which swept the most virtuous and innocent victims that ever breathed, to their destruction![1]

"Among the Queen's favourites, and those most in request at the Polignac parties, was the good Lady Spencer, with whom I became most intimately acquainted when I first went to England; and from whom, as well as from her two charming daughters, the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Duncannon, since Lady Besborough, I received the greatest marks of cordial hospitality. In

1 These vicious rivals in killing characters and blackening virtue with imputations of every vice, never lost sight of their victims till fate, cutting the thread of their own execrable existence, terminated a long career of crime too horrible to dwell upon! The whole story of the Princess Czartsorinski, to whom I have the honour of being allied, related by Lauzun, is totally destitute of any shadow of truth. This one instance will show how much credit is due to the rest of his infamous assertions against the honour and character of many others of the illustrious persons whom his venomous tongue has traduced.

consequence, when her ladyship came to France, I hastened to present her to the Queen. Her Majesty, taking a great liking to the amiable Englishwoman and wishing to profit by her private conversations and society, gave orders that Lady Spencer should pass to her private closet whenever she came to Versailles, without the formal ceremony of waiting in the ante-chamber to be announced.

"One day, Her Majesty, Lady Spencer, and myself were observing the difficulty there was in acquiring a correct pronunciation of the English language, when Lady Spencer remarked that it only required a little attention.

"'I beg your pardon,' said the Queen, 'that's not all, because there are many things you do not call by their proper names, as they are in the dictionary.'

"'Pray what are they, please your Majesty?'

"'Well, I will give you an instance. For example, *les culottes*—what do you call them?'

"'Small clothes,' replied her ladyship.

"'Ma foi! how can they be call small clothes for one large man? Now I do look in

the dictionary, and I find, pour le mot culottes—breeches.'

"'Oh, please your Majesty, we never call them by that name in England.'

"'Voilà donc, j'ai raison!'

"'We say inexpressibles!'

"'Ah, c'est mieux! Dat do please me ver much better. Il y a du bon sens là dedans. C'est une autre chose!'

"In the midst of this curious dialogue, in came the Duke of Dorset, Lord Edward Dillon, Count Fersen, and several English gentlemen, who, as they were going to the King's hunt, were all dressed in new buckskin breeches.

"'I do not like,' exclaimed the Queen to them, 'dem yellow irresistibles!'

"Lady Spencer nearly fainted. 'Vat make you so frightful, my dear lady?' said the Queen to her ladyship, who was covering her face with her hands. 'I am terrified at Your Majesty's mistake.'—'Comment? did you no tell me just now, dat in England de lady call de *culottes irresistibles?*'—'O mercy! I never could have made such a mistake, as to have applied to that part of the male dress

such a word, I said, please Your Majesty, *inexpressibles*.

"On this the gentlemen all laughed most heartily.

"'Vell, vell,' replied the Queen, 'do, my dear lady, discompose yourself. I vill no more call de breeches *irresistibles*, but say small clothes, if even elles sont upon a giant!'

"At the repetition of the naughty word *breeches*, poor Lady Spencer's English delicacy quite overcame her. Forgetting where she was, and also the company she was in, she ran from the room with her cross stick in her hand, ready to lay it on the shoulders of anyone who should attempt to obstruct her passage, flew into her carriage, and drove off full speed, as if fearful of being contaminated: all to the no small amusement of the male guests.

"Her Majesty and I laughed till the very tears ran down our cheeks. The Duke of Dorset, to keep up the joke, said there really were some counties in England where they called culottes *irresistibles*.

"Now that I am upon the subject of England,

and the peace of 1783, which brought such throngs of English over to France, there occurs to me a circumstance, relating to the treaty of commerce signed at that time, which exhibits the Count de Vergennes to some advantage; and with that let me dismiss the topic.

"The Count de Vergennes was one of the most distinguished ministers of France. I was intimately acquainted with him. His general character for uprightness prompted his sovereign to govern in a manner congenial to his own goodness of heart, which was certainly most for the advantage of his subjects. Vergennes cautioned Louis against the hypocritical adulations of his privileged courtiers. The Count had been schooled in state policy by the great Venetian senator, Francis Foscari, the subtlest politician of his age, whom he consulted during his life on every important matter; and he was not very easily to be deceived.

"When the treaty of commerce took place, at the period I mention, the experienced Vergennes foresaw—what afterwards really happened—that France would be inundated with British manu-

factures; but Calonne obstinately maintained the contrary; till he was severely reminded of the consequence of his misguided policy, in the insults inflicted on him by enraged mobs of thousands of French artificers, whenever he appeared in public. But though the mania for British goods had literally caused an entire stagnation of business in the French manufacturing towns, and thrown throngs upon the pavé for want of employment, yet M. de Calonne either did not see, or pretended not to see, the errors he had committed. Being informed that the Count de Vergennes had justly attributed the public disorders to his fallacious policy, M. de Calonne sent a friend to the Count demanding satisfaction for the charge of having caused the riots. The Count calmly replied that he was too much of a man of honour to take so great an advantage, as to avail himself of the opportunity offered, by killing a man who had only one life to dispose of, when there were so many with a prior claim, who were anxious to destroy him *en société*. 'Bid M. de Calonne,' continued the Count, 'first get out of that scrape, as the English boxers do

when their eyes are closed up after a pitched battle. He has been playing at blind man's buff, but the poverty to which he has reduced so many of our trades-people has torn the English bandage from his eyes!' For three or four days the Count de Vergennes visited publicly, and showed himself everywhere in and about Paris; but M. de Calonne was so well convinced of the truth of the old fox's satire that he pocketed his annoyance, and no more was said about fighting. Indeed, the Count de Vergennes gave hints of being able to show that M. de Calonne had been bribed into the treaty."

The Princess Lamballe has alluded in a former page to the happiness which the Queen enjoyed during the visits of the foreign princes to the Court of France. Her papers contain a few passages upon the opinions Her Majesty entertained of the royal travellers; which, although in the order of time they should have been mentioned before the peace with England, yet, not to disturb the chain of the narrative, respecting the connexion with the Princess Lamballe, of the pre-

vailing libels, and the partiality shown towards the English, I have reserved them for the conclusion of the present chapter. The timidity of the Queen in the presence of the illustrious strangers, and her agitation when about to receive them, have, I think, been already spoken of. Upon the subject of the royal travellers themselves, and other personages, the Princess expresses herself thus.

"The Queen had never been an admirer of Catharine II. Notwithstanding her studied policy for the advancement of civilization in her internal empire, the means which, aided by the Princess Dashkoff, she made use of to seat herself on the imperial throne of her weak husband, Peter the Third, had made her more understood than esteemed. Yet when her son, the Grand Duke of the North,[1] and the Grand Duchess, his wife, came to France, their description of Catharine's real character so shocked the maternal sensibility of

1 Afterwards the unhappy Emperor Paul.

Maria Antoinette that she could scarcely hear the name of the Empress without shuddering. The Grand Duke spoke of Catharine without the least disguise. He said he travelled merely for the security of his life from his mother, who had surrounded him with creatures that were his sworn enemies, her own spies and infamous favourites, to whose caprices they were utterly subordinate. He was aware that the dangerous credulity of the Empress might be every hour excited by these wretches to the destruction of himself and his Duchess, and, therefore, he had in absence sought the only refuge. He had no wish, he said, ever to return to his native country, till Heaven should check his mother's doubts respecting his dutiful filial affection towards her, or till God should be pleased to take her into his sacred keeping.

"The King was petrified at the Duke's description of his situation, and the Queen could not refrain from tears when the Duchess, his wife, confirmed all her husband had uttered on the subject. The Duchess said she had been warned by the untimely fate of the Princess d'Armstadt, her predecessor, the first wife of the Grand Duke.

to elude similar jealousy and suspicion on the part of her mother-in-law, by seclusion from the Court, in a country residence with her husband; indeed, that she had made it a point never to visit Petersburg, except on the express invitation of the Empress, as if she had been a foreigner.

"In this system the Grand Duchess persevered, even after her return from her travels. When she became pregnant, and drew near her accouchement, the Empress-mother permitted her to come to Petersburg for that purpose; but as soon as the ceremony required by the etiquette of the Imperial Court on those occasions ended, the Duchess immediately returned to her hermitage.

"This Princess was remarkably well-educated; she possessed a great deal of good, sound sense, and had profited by the instructions of some of the best German tutors during her very early years. It was the policy of her father, the Duke of Wirtemberg, who had a large family, to educate his children as *quietists* in matters of religion. He foresaw that the natural charms and acquired abilities of his daughters would one day call them to be the ornaments of the most distinguished

Courts in Europe, and he thought it prudent not to instil early prejudices in favour of peculiar forms of religion which might afterwards present an obstacle to their aggrandisement.[1]

"The notorious vices of the King of Denmark, and his total neglect both of his young Queen, Carolina Matilda, and of the interest of his distant dominions, while in Paris, created a feeling in the

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1 The first daughter of the Duke of Wirtemberg was the first wife of the present Emperor of Austria. She embraced the Catholic faith and died very young, two days before the Emperor Joseph the Second, at Vienna. The present Empress Dowager, late wife to Paul, became a proselyte to the Greek religion on her arrival at Petersburg. The son of the Duke of Wirtemberg, who succeeded him in the Dukedom, was a Protestant, it being his interest to profess that religion for the security of his inheritance. Prince Ferdinand, who was in the Austrian service, and a long time Governor of Vienna, was a Catholic, as he could not otherwise have enjoyed that office. He was of a very superior character to the Duke, his brother. Prince Louis, who held a commission under the Prussian Monarch, followed the religion of the country where he served, and the other Princes, who were in the employment of Sweden and other countries, found no difficulty in conforming themselves to the religion of the sovereigns under whom they served. None of them having any established forms of worship, they naturally embraced that which conduced most to their aggrandisement, emolument, or dignity.

Queen's mind towards that house which was not a little heightened by her disgust at the King of Sweden, when he visited the Court of Versailles. This King, though much more crafty than his brother-in-law, the King of Denmark, who revelled openly in his depravities, was not less vicious. The deception he made use of in usurping part of the rights of his people, combined with the worthlessness and duplicity of his private conduct, excited a strong indignation in the mind of Maria Antoinette, of which she was scarcely capable of withholding the expression in his presence.

"It was during the visit of the Duke and Duchess of the North, that the Cardinal de Rohan again appeared upon the scene. For eight or ten years he had never been allowed to show himself at Court, and had been totally shut out of every society where the Queen visited. On the arrival of the illustrious travellers at Versailles, the Queen, at her own expense, gave them a grand fête at her private palace, in the gardens of Trianon, similar to the one given by the Count de Provence[1]

1 Afterwards Louis XVIII.

to Her Majesty, in the gardens of Brunoi.

"On the eve of the fête, the Cardinal waited upon me to know if he would be permitted to appear there in the character he had the honour to hold at Court. I replied that I had made it a rule never to interfere in the private or public amusements of the Court, and that his Eminence must be the best judge how far he could obtrude himself upon the Queen's private parties, to which only a select number had been invited, in consequence of the confined spot where the fête was to be given.

"The Cardinal left me, not much satisfied at his reception. Determined to follow, as usual, his own misguided passion, he immediately went to Trianon, disguised with a large cloak. He saw the porter, and bribed him. He only wished, he said, to be placed in a situation whence he might see the Duke and Duchess of the North without being seen; but no sooner did he perceive the porter engaged at some distance than he left his cloak at the lodge, and went forward in his cardinal's dress, as if he had been one of the invited guests, placing himself purposely in the

Queen's path to attract her attention as she rode by in the carriage with the Duke and Duchess.

"The Queen was shocked and thunderstruck at seeing him. But, great as was her annoyance, knowing the Cardinal had not been invited and ought not to have been there, she only discharged the porter who had been seduced to let him in; and though the King, on being made acquainted with his treachery, would have banished his Eminence a hundred leagues from the capital, yet the Queen, the royal aunts, the Princess Elizabeth, and myself, not to make the affair public, and thereby disgrace the high order of his ecclesiastical dignity, prevented the King from exercising his authority by commanding instant exile.

"Indeed, the Queen could never get the better of her fears of being some day, or in some way or other, betrayed by the Cardinal, for having made him the confidant of the mortification she would have suffered if the projected marriage of Louis XV. and her sister had been solemnized. On this account she uniformly opposed whatever harshness the King at any time intended against the Cardinal.

"Thus was this wicked prelate left at leisure to premeditate the horrid plot of the famous necklace, the ever memorable fraud, which so fatally verified the presentiments of the Queen."

CHAPTER XI

EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS, AND RECAPITULATION OF THE LEADING PARTICULARS OF THE DIAMOND NECKLACE PLOT—*JOURNAL RESUMED*—PRINCESS LAMBALLE'S REMARKS ON THAT DARK TRANSACTION—VERGENNES OPPOSES JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION — THE QUEEN'S PARTY PREVAIL IN BRINGING THE AFFAIR BEFORE THE COUNCIL — GROUNDLESSNESS OF THE CHARGE AGAINST MARIA ANTOINETTE — CONFUSION OF ROHAN WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE QUEEN—HE PROCURES THE DESTRUCTION OF ALL THE LETTERS OF THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS — MEANS RESORTED TO BY ROHAN'S FRIENDS TO OBTAIN HIS ACQUITTAL — THE PRINCESS CONDÉ EXPENDS LARGE SUMS FOR THAT PURPOSE — HER CONFUSION WHEN THE PROOFS OF HER BRIBERY ARE EXHIBITED — THE KING'S IMPARTIALITY — MR. SHERIDAN DISCOVERS THE TREACHERY OF M. DE CALONNE — CALONNE'S ABJECT BEHAVIOUR, DISMISSAL, AND DISGRACE—NOTE OF THE EDITOR

THE production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, by Beaumarchais, upon the stage at Paris, so replete with indecorous and slanderous allusions to the royal family, had spread the prejudices against the Queen through the whole kingdom and every rank of France, just in time to prepare

all minds for the deadly blow which her Majesty received from the infamous plot of the diamond necklace. From this year, 1785, crimes and misfortunes trod closely on each others' heels in the history of the ill-starred Queen; and one calamity only disappeared to make way for the greater.

The destruction of the papers, which would have thoroughly explained the transaction, has still left all its essential particulars in some degree of mystery; and the interest of the clergy, who supported one of their own body, coupled with the arts and bribes of the high houses connected with the plotting prelate, must, of course, have discoloured greatly even what was well known.

It will be recollected that before the accession of Louis XVI. the Cardinal de Rohan was disgraced in consequence of his intrigues—that all his ingenuity was afterwards unremittingly exerted to obtain renewed favour—that he once obtruded himself upon the notice of the Queen in the gardens of Trianon—and that his conduct in so doing excited the indignation it deserved, but was left unpunished owing to the entreaties of the best friends of the Queen, and her own secret horror

of a man who had already caused her so much anguish.

With the histories of the fraud everyone is acquainted. That of Madame Campan, as far as it goes, is sufficiently detailed and correct to spare me the necessity of expatiating upon this theme of villainy. Yet, to assist the reader's memory, before returning to the Journal of the Princess Lamballe, I shall recapitulate the leading particulars.

The Cardinal had become connected with a young, but artful and necessitous, woman, of the name of Lamotte. It was known that the darling ambition of the Cardinal was to regain the favour of the Queen.

The necklace, which has been already spoken of, and which was originally destined by Louis XV. for Maria Antoinette—had her hand, by divorce, been transferred to him, but which, though afterwards intended by Louis XV. for his mistress, Du Barry, never came to her in consequence of his death—this fatal necklace was still in existence, and in the possession of the crown jewellers, Bœhmer and Bassange. It was valued at eighteen hundred thousand livres. The jewellers had often

pressed it upon the Queen, and even the King himself had enforced its acceptance. But the Queen dreaded the expense, especially at an epoch of pecuniary difficulty in the state, much more than she coveted the jewels, and uniformly and resolutely declined them, although they had been proposed to her on very easy terms of payment, as she really did not like ornaments.

It was made to appear at the parliamentary investigation that the artful Lamotte had impelled the Cardinal to believe that she herself was in communication with the Queen; that she had interested Her Majesty in favour of the long slighted Cardinal; that she had fabricated a correspondence, in which professions of penitence on the part of Rohan were answered by assurances of forgiveness from the Queen. The result of this correspondence was represented to be the engagement of the Cardinal to negociate the purchase of the necklace secretly, by a contract for periodical payments. To the forgery of papers was added, it was declared, the substitution of the Queen's person, by dressing up a girl of the Palais Royal to represent Her Majesty, whom she in some

degree resembled, in a secret and rapid interview with Rohan in a dark grove of the gardens of Versailles, where she was to give the Cardinal a rose, in token of her royal approbation, and then hastily disappear. The importunity of the jewellers, on the failure of the stipulated payment, disclosed the plot. A direct appeal of theirs to the Queen, to save them from ruin, was the immediate source of detection. The Cardinal was arrested, and all the parties tried. But the Cardinal was acquitted, and Lamotte and a subordinate agent alone punished. The quack Cagliostro was also in the plot, but he, too, escaped, like his confederate the Cardinal, who was made to appear as the dupe of Lamotte.

The Queen never got over the effect of this affair. Her friends well knew the danger of severe measures towards one capable of collecting around him strong support against a power already so much weakened by faction and discord. But the indignation of conscious innocence insulted, prevailed, though to its ruin!

But it is time to let the Princess Lamballe give her own impressions upon this fatal subject, and in her own words.

"How could Messieurs Bœhmer and Bassange presume that the Queen would have employed any third person to obtain an article of such value, without enabling them to produce an unequivocal document signed by her own hand and countersigned by mine, as had ever been the rule during my superintendence of the household, whenever anything was ordered from the jewellers by Her Majesty? Why did not Messieurs Bœhmer and Bassange wait on me, when they saw a document unauthorised by me, and so widely departing from the established forms? I must still think, as I have often said to the King, that Bœhmer and Bassange wished to get rid of this dead weight of diamonds in any way, and the Queen having unfortunately been led by me to hush up many foul libels against her reputation, as I then thought it prudent she should do, rather than compromise her character with wretches capable of doing anything to injure her, these jewellers, judging from this erroneous policy of the past, imagined that in this instance, also, rather than hazard exposure, Her Majesty would pay them for the necklace. This was a compromise

which I myself resisted, though so decidedly adverse to bringing the affair before the nation by a public trial. Of such an explosion, I foresaw the consequences, and I ardently entreated the King and Queen to take other measures. But, though till now so hostile to severity with the Cardinal, the Queen felt herself so insulted by the proceeding that she gave up every other consideration to make manifest her innocence.

"The wary Count de Vergennes did all he could to prevent the affair from getting before the public. Against the opinion of the King and the whole council of ministers he opposed judicial proceedings. Not that he conceived the Cardinal altogether guiltless; but he foresaw the fatal consequences that must result to Her Majesty, from bringing to trial an ecclesiastic of such rank; for he well knew that the host of the higher orders of the nobility, to whom the prelate was allied, would naturally strain every point to blacken the character of the King and Queen, as the only means of exonerating their kinsman in the eyes of the world from the criminal mystery attached to that most diabolical intrigue against the fair

fame of Maria Antoinette. The Count could not bear the idea of the Queen's name being coupled with those of the vile wretches, Lamotte and the mountebank Cagliostro, and therefore wished the King to chastise the Cardinal by a partial exile, which might have been removed at pleasure. But the Queen's party too fatally seconded her feelings, and prevailed.

"I sat by Her Majesty's bedside the whole of the night, after I heard what had been determined against the Cardinal by the council of ministers, to beg her to use all her interest with the King to persuade him to revoke the order of the warrant for the prelate's arrest. To this the Queen replied, 'Then the King, the ministers, and the people, will all deem me guilty.'

"Her Majesty's remark stopped all farther argument upon the subject, and I had the inconsolable grief to see my royal mistress rushing upon dangers which I had no power of preventing her from bringing upon herself.

"The slanderers who had imputed such unbounded influence to the Queen over the mind of Louis XVI. should have been consistent enough

to consider that with but a twentieth part of the tithe of her imputed power, uncontrolled as she then was by national authority, she might, without any exposure to third persons, have at once sent one of her pages to the *garde-meuble* and other royal depositaries, replete with hidden treasures of precious stones which never saw the light, and thence have supplied herself with more than enough to form ten necklaces, or to have fully satisfied, in any way she liked, the most unbounded passion for diamonds, for the use of which she would never have been called to account.

"But the truth is, the Queen had no love of ornaments. A proof occurred very soon after I had the honour to be nominated Her Majesty's superintendent. On the day of the great fête of the *Cordon Bleu*, when it was the etiquette to wear diamonds and pearls, the Queen had omitted putting them on. As there had been a greater affluence of visitors than usual that morning, and Her Majesty's toilet was overthronged by Princes and Princesses, I fancied in the bustle that the omission proceeded from forgetfulness. Conse-

quently, I sent the tire woman, in the Queen's hearing, to order the jewels to be brought in. Smilingly, Her Majesty replied, 'No, no! I have not forgotten these gaudy things; but I do not intend that the lustre of my eyes should be outshone by the one, or the whiteness of my teeth by the other; however, as you wish art to eclipse nature, I'll wear them to satisfy *you*, ma belle dame!'

"The King was always so thoroughly indulgent to Her Majesty with regard both to her public and private conduct that she never had any pretext for those reserves which sometimes tempt Queens as well as the wives of private individuals to commit themselves to third persons for articles of high value, which their caprice indiscreetly impels them to procure unknown to their natural guardians. Maria Antoinette had no reproach or censure for plunging into expenses beyond her means to apprehend from her royal husband. On the contrary, the King himself had spontaneously offered to purchase the necklace from the jewellers, who had urged it on him without limiting any time for payment. It was the intention of His Majesty

to have liquidated it out of his private purse. But Maria Antoinette declined the gift. Twice in my presence was the refusal repeated before Messieurs Bœhmer and Bassange. Who, then, can for a moment presume, after all these circumstances, that the Queen of France, with a nation's wealth at her feet and thousands of individuals offering her millions, which she never accepted, would have so far degraded herself and the honour of the nation, of which she was born to be the ornament, as to place herself gratuitously in the power of a knot of wretches, headed by a man whose general bad character for years had excluded him from Court and every respectable society, and had made the Queen herself mark him as an object of the utmost aversion.

"If these circumstances be not sufficient adequately to open the eyes of those whom prejudice has blinded, and whose ears have been deafened against truth, by the clamours of sinister conspirators against the monarchy instead of the monarchs; if all these circumstances, I repeat, do not completely acquit the Queen, argument, or even ocular demonstration itself, would be thrown

away. Posterity will judge impartially, and with impartial judges the integrity of Maria Antoinette needs no defender.

"When the natural tendency of the character of Rohan to romantic and extraordinary intrigue is considered in connection with the associates he had gathered around him, the plot of the necklace ceases to be a source of wonder. At the time the Cardinal was most at a loss for means to meet the necessities of his extravagance, and to obtain some means of access to the Queen, the mounteback quack, Cagliostro, made his appearance in France. His fame had soon flown from Strasburg to Paris, the magnet of vices and the seat of criminals. The Prince-Cardinal, known of old as a seeker after everything of notoriety, soon became the intimate of one who flattered him with the accomplishment of all his dreams in the realization of the philosopher's stone; converting puffs and French paste into brilliants; Roman pearls into Oriental ones; and turning earth to gold. The Cardinal, always in want of means to supply the insatiable exigencies of his ungovernable vices, had been the dupe through life

of his own credulity—a drowning man catching at a straw! But instead of making gold of base materials, Cagliostro's brass soon relieved his blind adherent of all his sterling metal. As many needy persons enlisted under the banners of this nostrum speculator, it is not to be wondered at that the infamous name of the Countess de Lamotte, and others of the same stamp, should have thus fallen into an association of the Prince-Cardinal; or that her libellous stories of the Queen of France should have found eager promulgators, where the real diamonds of the famous necklace being taken apart were divided piecemeal among a horde of the most depraved sharpers that ever existed to make human nature blush at its own degradation![1]

1 Cagliostro, when he came to Rome, for I know not whether there had been any previous intimacy, got acquainted with a certain Marchese Vivaldi, a Roman, whose wife had been for years the *chère amie* of the last Venetian ambassador, Peter Pesaro, a noble patrician, and who has ever since his embassy at Rome been his constant companion and now resides with him in England. No men in Europe are more constant in their attachments than the Venetians. Pesaro is the sole proprietor of one of the most beautiful and magnificent palaces on the Grand Canal at Venice, though he now lives in the outskirts of London, in a small house, not so large as one of the offices of his immense

"Eight or ten years had elapsed from the time Her Majesty had last seen the Cardinal to speak to him, with the exception of the casual glance as she drove by when he furtively introduced himself into the garden at the fête at

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noble palace, where his agent transacts his business. The husband of Pesaro's *chère amie*, the Marchese Vivaldi, when Cagliostro was arrested and sent to the Castello Santo Angelo at Rome, was obliged to fly his country, and went to Venice, where he was kept secreted and maintained by the Marquis Solari, and it was only through his means and those of the Cardinal Consalvi, then known only as the *musical* Abbé Consalvi, from his great attachment to the immortal Cimarosa, that Vivaldi was ever allowed to return to his native country; but Consalvi, who was the friend of Vivaldi, feeling with the Marquis Solari much interested for his situation, they together contrived to convince Pius VI. that he was more to be pitied than blamed, and thus obtained his recall. I have merely given this note as a further warning to be drawn from the connections of the Cardinal de Rohan, to deter hunters after novelty from forming ties with innovators and impostors. Cagliostro was ultimately condemned, by the Roman laws under Pope Pius VI. for life, to the galleys, where he died.

Proverbs ought to be respected; for it is said that no phrase becomes a proverb until after a century's experience of its truth. In England, it is proverbial to judge of men by the company they keep. To judge of the Cardinal de Rohan from his most intimate friend, the galley-slave, Cagliostro, what shall we say of his dignity as a prince, and his purity as a prelate?

Trianon, till he was brought to the King's cabinet when arrested, and interrogated, and confronted with her face to face. The Prince started when he saw her. The comparison of her features with those of the guilty wretch who had dared to personate her in the garden at Versailles completely destroyed his self-possession. Her Majesty's person was become fuller, and her face was much longer than that of the infamous d'Oliva. He could neither speak nor write an intelligible reply to the questions put to him. All he could utter, and that only in broken accents, was, 'I'll pay! I'll pay Messieurs Bassange.'

"Had he not speedily recovered himself, all the mystery in which this affair has been left, so injuriously to the Queen, might have been prevented. His papers would have declared the history of every particular, and distinctly established the extent of his crime and the thorough innocence of Maria Antoinette of any connivance at the fraud, or any knowledge of the necklace. But when the Cardinal was ordered by the King's council to be put under arrest, his self-possession returned. He was given in charge to an officer

totally unacquainted with the nature of the accusation. Considering only the character of his prisoner as one of the highest dignitaries of the Church, from ignorance and inexperience, he left the Cardinal an opportunity to write a German note to his factotum, the Abbé Georgel. In this note the trusty secretary was ordered to destroy all the letters of Cagliostro, Madame de Lamotte, and the other wretched associates of the infamous conspiracy; and the traitor was scarcely in custody when every evidence of his treason had disappeared. The note to Georgel saved his master from expiating his offence at the Place de Grêve.

"The consequences of the affair would have been less injurious, however, had it been managed, even as it stood, with better judgment and temper. But it was improperly entrusted to the Baron de Bréteuil and the Abbé Vermond, both sworn enemies of the Cardinal. Their main object was the ruin of him they hated, and they listened only to their resentments. They never weighed the danger of publicly prosecuting an individual whose condemnation would involve the first families in France, for he was allied even to many of the

Princes of the blood. They should have considered that exalted personages, naturally feeling as if any crime proved against their kinsman would be a stain upon themselves, would of course resort to every artifice to exonerate the accused. To criminate the Queen was the only and the obvious method. Few are those nearest the Crown who are not most jealous of its wearers! Look at the long civil wars of York and Lancaster, and the short reign of Richard. The downfall of Kings meets less resistance than that of their inferiors.

"Still, notwithstanding all the deplorable blunders committed in this business of Rohan, justice was not smothered without great difficulty. His acquittal cost the families of Rohan and Condé more than a million of livres, distributed among all ranks of the clergy; besides immense sums sent to the Court of Rome to make it invalidate the judgment of the civil authority of France upon so high a member of the Church, and to induce it to order the Cardinal's being sent to Rome by way of screening him from the prosecution, under the plausible pretext of more rigid justice.

"Considerable sums in money and jewels were also lavished on all the female relatives of the peers of France, who were destined to sit on the trial. The Abbé Georgel bribed the press, and extravagantly paid all the literary pens in France to produce the most Jesuitical and sophisticated arguments in his patron's justification. Though these writers dared not accuse or in any way criminate the Queen, yet the respectful doubts, with which their defence of her were seasoned, did infinitely more mischief than any direct attack, which could have been directly answered.

"The long cherished, but till now smothered, resentment of the Countess de Noailles, the scrupulous Madame Etiquette, burst forth on this occasion. Openly joining the Cardinal's party against her former mistress and sovereign, she recruited and armed all in favour of her protégé; for it was by her intrigues Rohan had been nominated ambassador to Vienna. Mesdames de Guéménée and Marsan, rival pretenders to favours of His Eminence, were equally earnest to support him against the Queen. In short, there was scarcely a family of distinction in France that, from the

libels which then inundated the kingdom, did not consider the King as having infringed on their prerogatives and privileges in accusing the Cardinal.

"Shortly after the acquittal of this most artful, and, in the present instance, certainly too fortunate prelate, the Princess Condé came to congratulate me on the Queen's innocence, and her kinsman's liberation from the Bastille.

"Without the slightest observation, I produced to the Princess documents in proof of the immense sums she alone had expended in bribing the judges and other persons, to save her relation, the Cardinal, by criminating Her Majesty.

"The Princess Condé instantly fell into violent hysterics, and was carried home apparently lifeless.

"I have often reproached myself for having given that sudden shock and poignant anguish to her highness, but I could not have supposed that one who came so barefacedly to impress me with the Cardinal's innocence, could have been less firm in refuting her own guilt.

"I never mentioned the circumstance to the

Queen. Had I done so, her highness would have been for ever excluded from the Court and the royal presence. This was no time to increase the enemies of Her Majesty, and the affair of the trial being ended, I thought it best to prevent any further breach from a discord between the Court and the house of Condé. However, from a coldness subsisting ever after between the Princess and myself, I doubt not that the Queen had her suspicions that all was not as it should be in that quarter. Indeed, though Her Majesty never confessed it, I think she herself had discovered something at that very time not altogether to the credit of the Princess Condé, for she ceased going, from that period, to any of the fêtes given at Chantilly.

"These were but a small portion of the various instruments successfully levelled by parties, even the least suspected, to blacken and destroy the fair fame of Maria Antoinette.

"The document which so justly alarmed the Princess Condé when I showed it to her came into my hands in the following manner:

"Whenever a distressed family, or any particular individual, applied to me for relief, or was

otherwise recommended for charitable purposes, I generally sent my little English protégée — on whose veracity, well knowing the goodness of her heart, I could rely,[1]—to ascertain whether their claims were really well grounded.

"One day, I received an earnest memorial from a family, desiring to make some private communications of peculiar delicacy. I sent my usual ambassadress to inquire into its import. On making her mission known, she found no difficulty in ascertaining the object of the application. It proceeded from conscientious distress of mind. A relation of this family had been the regular confessor of a convent. With the Lady Abbess of this convent and her trusty nuns the Princess Condé had deposited considerable sums of money, to be bestowed in creating influence in favour of the Cardinal de Rohan. The confessor, being a man of some consideration among the clergy, was

1 Indeed, I never deceived the Princess on these occasions. She was so generously charitable that I should have conceived it a crime. When I could get no satisfactory information, I said I could not trace anything undeserving her charity, and left her highness to exercise her own discretion.

applied to, to use his influence with the needier members of the Church more immediately about him, as well as those of higher station, to whom he had access, in furthering the purposes of the Princess Condé. The bribes were applied as intended. But, at the near approach of death, the confessor was struck with remorse. He begged his family, without mentioning his name, to send the accounts and vouchers of the sums he had so distributed, to me, as a proof of his contrition, that I might make what use of them I should think proper. The papers were handed to my messenger, who pledged her word of honour that I would certainly adhere to the dying man's last injunctions. She desired they might be sealed up by the family, and by them directed to me.[1] She then hastened back to our place of rendezvous, where I waited for her, and where she consigned the packet into my own hands.

"That part of the papers which compromised only the Princess Condé was shown by me to the Princess on the occasion I have mentioned. It

1 To this day, I neither know the name of the convent or the confessor.

was natural enough that she should have been shocked at the detection of having suborned the clergy and others with heavy bribes to avert the deserved fate of the Cardinal. I kept this part of the packet secret till the King's two aunts, who had also been warm advocates in favour of the prelate, left Paris for Rome. Then, as Pius VI. had interested himself as head of the Church for the honour of one of its members, I gave them these very papers to deliver to His Holiness for his private perusal. I was desirous of enabling this truly charitable and Christian head of our sacred religion to judge how far his interference was justified by facts. I am thoroughly convinced, that had he been sooner furnished with these evidences, instead of blaming the royal proceeding he would have urged it on, nay, would himself have been the first to advise that the foul conspiracy should be dragged into open day.[1]

"The Count de Vergennes told me that the

1 But these proofs came too late to redeem the character of her, whom fate, cruel fate! had written in the book of destinies a victim in this world, for her immortal salvation in the next. Never saint more merited to be ranked in the long list of martyrs than Maria Antoinette.

King displayed the greatest impartiality throughout the whole investigation for the exculpation of the Queen, and made good his title on this, as he did on every occasion where his own unbiassed feelings and opinions were called into action, to great esteem for much higher qualities than the world has usually given him credit for.

"I have been accused of having opened the prison doors of the culprit Lamotte for her escape; but the chargé is false. I interested myself, as was my duty, to shield the Queen from public reproach by having Lamotte sent to a place of penitence; but I never interfered, except to lessen her punishment, after the judicial proceedings. The diamonds, in the hands of her vile associates at Paris, procured her ample means to escape. I should have been the Queen's greatest enemy had I been the cause of giving liberty to one who acted, and might naturally have been expected to act, as this depraved woman did.

"Through the private correspondence which was carried on between this country and England, after I had left it, I was informed that M. de Calonne, whom the Queen never liked, and who

was called to the administration against her will—which he knew, and consequently became one of her secret enemies in the affair of the necklace—was discovered to have been actively employed against Her Majesty in the work published in London by Lamotte.

"Mr. Sheridan was the gentleman who first gave me this information.

"I immediately sent a trusty person by the Queen's orders to London, to buy up the whole work. It was too late. It had been already so widely circulated that its consequences could no longer be prevented. I was lucky enough, however, for a considerable sum to get a copy from a person intimate with the author, the margin of which, in the hand-writing of M. de Calonne, actually contained numerous additional circumstances which were to have been published in a second edition! This publication my agent, aided by some English gentlemen, arrived in time to suppress.

"The copy I allude to was brought to Paris and shown to the Queen. She instantly flew with it in her hands to the King's cabinet.

"'Now, sire,' exclaimed she, 'I hope you will be convinced that my enemies are those whom I have long considered as the most pernicious of Your Majesty's councillors—your own cabinet ministers—your M. de Calonne!—respecting whom I have often given you my opinion, which, unfortunately, has always been attributed to mere female caprice, or as having been biassed by the intrigues of Court favourites! This, I hope, Your Majesty will now be able to contradict!'

"The King all this time was looking over the different pages containing M. de Calonne's additions on their margins. On recognising the hand-writing, His Majesty was so affected by this discovered treachery of his minister and the agitation of his calumniated Queen that he could scarcely articulate.

"'Where,' said he, 'did you procure this?'

"'Through the means, sire, of some of the worthy members of that nation your treacherous ministers made our enemy—from England! where your unfortunate Queen, your injured wife, is compassionated!'

"'Who got it for you?'

"'My dearest, my real, and my only sincere friend, the Princess Lamballe!'

"The King requested I should be sent for. I came. As may be imagined, I was received with the warmest sentiments of affection by both Their Majesties. I then laid before the King the letter of Mr. Sheridan, which was, in substance, as follows[1]:

"'MADAM,—

"'A work of mine, which I did not choose should be printed, was published in Dublin and transmitted to be sold in London. As soon as I was informed of it, and had procured a spurious copy, I went to the bookseller to put a stop to its circulation. I there met with a copy of the work of Madame de Lamotte, which has been corrected by someone at Paris and sent back to the bookseller for a second edition. Though not in time to suppress the first edition, owing to its rapid circulation, I have had interest enough, through the means of the bookseller of whom I speak, to remit you the copy which has been sent as the basis of a new one. The corrections, I am told, are by one of

1 The letter was, of course, translated in the Journal of the Princess into Italian; and is thence here restored into English. The original letter probably shared the fate of other papers of her highness in the revolutionary riots.

the King's ministers. If true, I should imagine the writer will be easily traced.

"'I am happy that it has been in my power to make this discovery, and I hope it will be the means of putting a stop to this most scandalous publication. I feel myself honoured in having contributed thus far to the wishes of Her Majesty, which I hope I have fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of your highness.

"'Should anything further transpire on this subject, I will give you the earliest information.

"'I remain, madam, with profound respect, your highness' most devoted,

very humble servant,

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.'[1]

"M. de Calonne immediately received the King's mandate to resign the portfolio. The minister desired that he might be allowed to give his resignation to the King himself. His request was granted. The Queen was present at the interview.

1 Madame Campan mentions in her work that the Queen had informed her of the treachery of the minister, but did not enter into particulars, nor explain the mode or source of its detection. Notwithstanding the parties had bound themselves for the sums they received not to reprint the work, a second edition appeared a short time afterwards in London. This, which was again bought up by the French ambassador, was the same which was to have been burned by the King's command at the china manufactory at Sèvres.

The work in question was produced. On beholding it, the minister nearly fainted. The King got up and left the room. The Queen, who remained, told M. de Calonne that His Majesty had no further occasion for his services. He fell on his knees. He was not allowed to speak, but was desired to leave Paris.

"The dismissal and disgrace of M. de Calonne were scarcely known before all Paris vociferated that they were owing to the intrigues of the favourite, Polignac, in consequence of his having refused to administer to her own superfluous extravagance and the Queen's repeated demands on the treasury to satisfy the numerous dependants of the Duchess.

"This, however, was soon officially disproved by the exhibition of a written proposition of Calonne's to the Queen, to supply an additional hundred thousand francs that year to her annual revenue, which Her Majesty refused. As for the Duchess de Polignac, so far from having caused the disgrace, she was not even aware of the circumstance from which it arose; nor did the minister himself ever know how, or by what agency his falsehood was so thoroughly unmasked."

NOTE.

The work which is here spoken of the Queen kept, as a proof of the treachery of Calonne towards her and his sovereign, till the storming of the Tuileries on the 10th of August, 1792, when, with the rest of the papers and property plundered on that memorable occasion, it fell into the hands of the ferocious mob.

M. de Calonne soon after left France for Italy. There he lived for some time in the palace of a particular friend of mine and the Marquis, my husband, the Countess Francese Tressino, at Vicenza.

In consequence of our going every season to take the mineral waters and use the baths at Valdagno, we had often occasion to be in company with M. de Calonne, both at Vicenza and Valdagno, where I must do him the justice to say he conducted himself with the greatest circumspection in speaking of the Revolution.

Though he evidently avoided the topic which terminates this chapter, yet one day, being closely pressed upon the subject, he said forgeries were daily committed on ministers, and were most particularly so in France at the period in question; that he had borne the blame of various imprudencies neither authorised nor executed by him; that much had been done and supposed to have been done with his sanction, of

which he had not the slightest knowledge. This he observed generally, without specifying any express instance.

He was then asked whether he did not consider himself responsible for the mischief he occasioned by declaring the nation in a state of bankruptcy. He said, "No, not in the least. There was no other way of preventing enormous sums from being daily lavished, as they then were, on herds of worthless beings; that the Queen had sought to cultivate a state of private domestic society, but that, in the attempt, she only warmed in her bosom domestic vipers, who fed on the vital spirit of her generosity." He mentioned no names.

I then took the liberty of asking him his opinion of the Princess Lamballe.

"Oh, madam! had the rest of Her Majesty's numerous attendants possessed the tenth part of that unfortunate victim's virtues, Her Majesty would never have been led into the errors which all France must deplore!

"I shall never forget her," continued he, "the day I went to take leave of her. She was sitting on a sofa when I entered. On seeing me, she rose immediately. Before I could utter a syllable, 'Sir,' said the Princess, 'you are accused of being the Queen's enemy. Acquit yourself of the foul deed imputed to you, and I shall be happy to serve you as far as lies in my power. Till then, I must decline holding any communication with

an individual thus situated. I am her friend, and cannot receive anyone known to be otherwise.'"

"There was something," added he, "so sublime, so dignified, and altogether so firm, though mild in her manner, that she appeared not to belong to a race of earthly beings!"

Seeing the tears fall from his eyes, while he was thus eulogising her whose memory I shall ever venerate, I almost forgave him the mischief of his imprudence, which led to her untimely end. I therefore carefully avoided wounding his few gray hairs and latter days, and left him still untold that it was by her, of whom he thought so highly, that his uncontradicted treachery had been discovered.

CHAPTER XII

JOURNAL CONTINUED — ARCHBISHOP OF SENS MADE MINISTER, DISMISSED, AND HIS EFFIGY BURNED — THE QUEEN IMPRUDENTLY PATRONISES HIS RELATIONS —MOBS—DANGEROUS UNRESERVE OF THE QUEEN— APOLOGY FOR THE ARCHBISHOP OF SENS—THE QUEEN FORCED TO TAKE A PART IN THE GOVERNMENT— MEETING OF THE STATES GENERAL — ANONYMOUS LETTER TO THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE—SIGNIFICANT VISIT OF THE DUCHESS OF ORLEANS — DISASTROUS PROCESSION—BARNAVE GIVES HIS OPINION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS TO THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE, WHO COMMUNICATES WITH THE QUEEN—BRIBERIES BY ORLEANS ON THE DAY OF THE PROCESSION—HE FAINTS IN THE ASSEMBLY—NECKAR SUSPECTED OF AN UNDERSTANDING WITH HIM — IS DISMISSED — NO COMMUNICATION ON PUBLIC BUSINESS WITH THE QUEEN BUT THROUGH THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE — POLITICAL INFLUENCE FALSELY ASCRIBED TO THE DUCHESS DE POLIGNAC— HER UNPOPULARITY—DUKE OF HARCOURT AND THE FIRST DAUPHIN — DEATH OF THE FIRST DAUPHIN— CAUSE OF HARCOURT'S HARSH TREATMENT OF POLIGNAC —SECOND INTERVIEW OF BARNAVE WITH THE PRINCESS LAMBALLE—HE SOLICITS AN AUDIENCE OF THE QUEEN, WHICH IS REFUSED—DIALOGUE BETWEEN LAMBALLE AND THE PRINCE DE CONTI — REMARKS ON THE POLIGNACS—MARRIAGE OF FIGARO, A POLITICAL SATIRE

"Of the many instances in which the Queen's exertions to serve those whom she conceived likely

to benefit and relieve the nation, turned to the injury, not only of herself, but those whom she patronised and the cause she would strengthen, one of the most unpopular was that of the promotion of Brienne, Archbishop of Sens, to the ministry. Her interest in his favour was entirely created by the Abbé Vermond, himself too superficial to pronounce upon any qualities, and especially such as were requisite for so high a station. By many, the partiality which prompted Vermond to espouse the interests of the Archbishop was ascribed to the amiable sentiment of gratitude for the recommendation of that dignitary, by which Vermond himself first obtained his situation at Court; but there were others, who have been deemed deeper in the secret, who impute it to the less honourable source of self-interest, to the mere spirit of ostentation, to the hope of its enabling him to bring about the destruction of the Polignacs. Be this as it may, the Abbé well knew that a minister indebted for his elevation solely to the Queen would be supported by her to the last.

"This, unluckily, proved the case. Maria

Antoinette persisted in upholding every act of Brienne, till his ignorance and unpardonable blunders drew down the general indignation of the people against Her Majesty and her protégé, with whom she was identified. The King had assented to the appointment with no other view than that of not being utterly isolated and to show a respect for his consort's choice. But the incapable minister was presently compelled to retire, not only from office but from Paris. Never was a minister more detested while in power, or a people more enthusiastically satisfied at his going out. His effigy was burnt in every town of France, and the general illuminations and bonfires in the capital were accompanied by hooting and hissing the deposed statesman to the barriers.

"The Queen, prompted by the Abbé Vermond, even after Brienne's dismission, gave him tokens of her royal munificence. Her Majesty feared that her acting otherwise to a minister, who had been honoured by her confidence, would operate as a check to prevent all men of celebrity from exposing their fortunes to so ungracious a return for lending their best services to the state, which

now stood in need of the most skilful pilots. Such were the motives assigned by Her Majesty herself to me, when I took the liberty of expostulating with her respecting the dangers which threatened herself and family, from this continued devotedness to a minister against whom the nation had pronounced so strongly. I could not but applaud the delicacy of the feeling upon which her conduct had been grounded; nor could I blame her, in my heart, for the uprightness of her principle, in showing that what she had once undertaken should not be abandoned through female caprice. I told Her Majesty that the system upon which she acted was praiseworthy; and that its application in the present instance would have been so had the Archbishop possessed as much talent as he lacked; but that now it was quite requisite for her to stop the public clamour by renouncing her protection of a man who had so seriously endangered the public tranquility and her own reputation.[1]

1 The Princess Lamballe had no particularly shining talents; but her understanding was sound, and she seldom gave her opinion without mature reflection, and never without being called upon, or when she distinctly foresaw the

"As a proof how far my caution was well founded, there was an immense riotous mob raised about this time against the Queen, in consequence of her having appointed the dismissed minister's niece, Madame de Canisy, to a place at Court, and having given her picture, set in diamonds, to the Archbishop himself.

"The Queen, in many cases, was by far too communicative to some of her household, who immediately divulged all they gathered from her unreserve. How could these circumstances have transpired to the people but from those nearest the person of Her Majesty, who, knowing the public feeling better than their royal mistress could be supposed to know it, did their own feeling little credit by the mischievous exposure. The people were exasperated beyond all conception. The Abbé Vermond placed before Her Majesty the consequences of her communicativeness, and from this time forward she never repeated the error. After the lesson she had received, none of her

danger which must accrue from its being withheld. Would to Heaven the Queen had had more advisers like her, who felt so little for herself and so much for the welfare of her royal mistress!

female attendants, not even the Duchess de Polignac, to whom she would have confided her very existence, could, had they been ever so much disposed, have drawn anything upon public matters from her. With me, as her superintendent and entitled by my situation to interrogate and give her counsel, she was not, of course, under the same restriction. To his other representations of the consequences of the Queen's indiscreet openness, the Abbé Vermond added that, being obliged to write all the letters, private and public, he often found himself greatly embarrassed by affairs having gone forth to the world beforehand. One misfortune of putting this seal upon the lips of Her Majesty was that it placed her more thoroughly in the Abbé's power. She was, of course, obliged to rely implicitly upon him concerning many points, which, had they undergone the discussion necessarily resulting from free conversation, would have been shown to her under very different aspects. A man with a better heart, less Jesuitical, and not so much interested as Vermond was to keep his place, would have been a safer monitor.

"Though the Archbishop of Sens was so

much hated and despised, much may be said in apology for his disasters. His unpopularity, and the Queen's support of him against the people, was certainly a vital blow to the monarchy. There is no doubt of his having been a poor substitute for the great men who had so gloriously beaten the political paths of administration, particularly the Count de Vergennes and Neckar. But at that time, when France was threatened by its great convulsion, where is the genius which might not have committed itself? And here is a man coming to rule amidst revolutionary feelings, with no knowledge whatever of revolutionary principles; a pilot steering into one harbour by the chart of another. I am by no means a vindicator of the Archbishop's obstinacy in offering himself a candidate for a situation entirely foreign to the occupations, habits, and studies of his whole life; but his intentions may have been good enough, and we must not charge the physician with murder who has only mistaken the disease, and, though wrong in his judgment, has been zealous and conscientious; nor must we blame the comedians for the faults of the comedy,

The errors were not so much in the men who did not succeed, as in the manners of the times.

"The part which the Queen was now openly compelled to bear in the management of public affairs, increased the public feeling against her from dislike to hatred. Her Majesty was unhappy, not only from the necessity which called her out of the sphere to which she thought her sex ought to be confined, but from the divisions which existed in the royal family upon points in which their common safety required a common scheme of action. Her favourite brother-in-law, d'Artois, had espoused the side of d'Orleans, and the popular party seemed to prevail against her, even with the King.

"The various parliamentary assemblies, which had swept on their course, under various denominations, in rapid and stormy succession, were now followed by one which, like Aaron's rod, was to swallow up the rest. Its approach was regarded by the Queen with ominous reluctance. At length, however, the moment for the meeting of the States-General at Versailles arrived. Neckar was once more in favour, and a sort of forlorn hope of

better times dawned upon the perplexed monarch, in his anticipations from this assembly.

"The night before the procession of the instalment of the States-General was to take place, it being my duty to attend Her Majesty, I received an anonymous letter, cautioning me not to be seen that day by her side. I immediately went to the King's apartments and showed him the letter. His Majesty humanely enjoined me to abide by its counsels. I told him I hoped he would for once permit me to exercise my own discretion; for if my royal sovereign were in danger, it was then that her attendants should be most eager to rally round her, in order to watch over her safety and encourage her fortitude.

"While we were thus occupied, the Queen and my sister-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans, entered the King's apartment, to settle some part of the etiquette respecting the procession.

"'I wish,' exclaimed the Duchess, 'that this procession were over; or that it were never to take place; or that none of us had to be there; or else, being obliged, that we had all passed, and were comfortably at home again.'

"'Its taking place,' answered the Queen, 'never had my sanction, especially at Versailles. M. Neckar appears to be in its favour, and answers for its success. I wish he may not be deceived; but I much fear that he is guided more by the mistaken hope of maintaining his own popularity by this impolitic meeting, than by any conscientious confidence in its advantage to the King's authority.'

"The King, having in his hand the letter which I had just brought him, presented it to the Queen.

"'This, my dear Duchess,' cried the Queen, 'comes from the Palais Royal manufactory, to poison the very first sentiments of delight at the union expected between the King and his subjects, by inuendos of the danger which must result from my being present at it. Look at the insidiousness of the thing! Under a pretext of kindness, cautions against the effect of their attachment are given to my most sincere and affectionate attendants, whose fidelity none dare attack openly. I am, however, rejoiced that Lamballe has been cautioned.'

"'Against what?' replied I.

"'Against appearing in the procession,' answered the Queen.

"'It is only,' I exclaimed, 'by putting me in the grave they can ever withdraw me from Your Majesty. While I have life and Your Majesty's sanction, force only will prevent me from doing my duty. Fifty thousand daggers, Madame, were they all raised against me, would have no power to shake the firmness of my character or the earnestness of my attachment. I pity the wretches who have so little penetration. Victim or no victim, nothing shall ever induce me to quit Your Majesty.'

"The Queen and the Duchess, both in tears, embraced me. After the Duchess had taken her leave, the King and Queen hinted their suspicions that she had been apprised of the letter and had made this visit expressly to observe what effect it had produced, well knowing at the time that some attempt was meditated by the hired mob and purchased deputies already brought over to the Orleans faction. Not that the slightest suspicion of collusion could ever be attached to the good Duchess of Orleans against the Queen. The

intentions of the Duchess were known to be as virtuous and pure as those of her husband's party were criminal and mischievous. But, no doubt, she had intimations of the result intended; and, unable to avert the storm or prevent its cause, had been instigated by her strong attachment to me, as well as the paternal affection her father, the Duke de Penthièvre, bore me, to attempt to lessen the exasperation of the Palais Royal party and the Duke, her husband, against me, by dissuading me from running any risk upon the occasion.

"The next day, May 5, 1789, at the very moment when all the resources of nature and art seemed exhausted to render the Queen a paragon of loveliness beyond anything I had ever before witnessed, even in her; when every impartial eye was eager to behold and feast on that form whose beauty warmed every heart in her favour; at that moment a horde of miscreants, just as she came within sight of the Assembly thundered in her ears, "*Orleans for ever!*" three or four times,[1] while

1 At that moment her loveliness received its blight. From the instant she heard that cry, her severest sorrows and their effects began. It proved her death cry.

she and the King were left to pass unheeded Even the warning of the letter, from which she had reason to expect some commotions, suggested to her imagination nothing like this, and she was dreadfully shaken. I sprang forward to support her. The King's party, prepared for the attack, shouted "*Vive le roi! vive la reine!*" As I turned, I saw some of the members lividly pale, as if fearing their machinations had been discovered; but, as they passed, they said in the hearing of Her Majesty, "*Remember, you are the daughter of Maria Theresa.*"—"*True,*" answered the Queen. The Duke de Biron, Orleans, La Fayette, Mirabeau, and the Mayor of Paris, seeing Her Majesty's emotion, came up, and were going to stop the procession. All, in apparent agitation, cried out "*Halt!*" The Queen, sternly looking at them, made a sign with her head to proceed, recovered herself, and moved forward in the train, with all the dignity and self-possession for which she was so eminently distinguished.

"But this self-command in public proved nearly fatal to Her Majesty on her return to her apartment. There her real feelings broke forth, and

their violence was so great as to cause the bracelets on her wrists and the pearls in her necklace to burst from the threads and settings, before her women and the ladies in attendance could have time to take them off. She remained many hours in a most alarming state of strong convulsions. Her clothes were obliged to be cut from her body, to give her ease; but as soon as she was undressed, and tears came to her relief, she flew alternately to the Princess Elizabeth and to myself; but we were both too much overwhelmed to give her the consolation of which she stood so much in need.

"Barnave that very evening came to my private apartment, and tendered his services to the Queen. He told me he wished Her Majesty to be convinced that he was a Frenchman; that he only desired his country might be governed by salutary laws, and not by the caprice of weak sovereigns, or a vitiated, corrupt, ministry; that the clergy and nobility ought to contribute to the wants of the state equally with every other class of the King's subjects; that when this was accomplished, and abuses were removed, by such

a national representation as would enable the minister, Neckar, to accomplish his plans for the liquidation of the national debt, I might assure Her Majesty that both the King and herself would find themselves happier in a constitutional government than they had ever yet been; for such a government would set them free from all dependence on the caprice of ministers, and lessen a responsibility of which they now experienced the misery; that if the King sincerely entered into the spirit of regenerating the French nation, he would find among the present representatives many members of probity, loyal and honourable in their intentions, who would never become the destroyers of a limited legitimate monarchy, or the corrupt regicides of a rump parliament, such as brought the wayward Charles the First, of England, to the fatal block.

"I attempted to relate the conversation to the Queen. She listened with the greatest attention till I came to the part concerning the constitutional King, when Her Majesty lost her patience, and prevented me from proceeding.[1]

1 This and other conversations, which will be found in subsequent pages, will prove that Barnave's sentiments in

"The expense of the insulting scene, which had so overcome Her Majesty, was five hundred thousand francs! This sum was paid by the agents of the Palais Royal, and its execution entrusted principally to Mirabeau, Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, and another individual, who was afterwards brought over to the Court party.

"The history of the assembly itself on the day following, the 6th of May, is too well known. The sudden perturbation of a guilty conscience, which overcame the Duke of Orleans, seemed like

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favour of the royal family long preceded the affair at Varennes, the beginning of which Madame Campan assigns to it. Indeed it must by this time be evident to the reader, that Madame Campan, though very correct in relating all she knew, with respect to the history of Maria Antoinette, was not in possession of matters foreign to her occupation about the person of the Queen, and, in particular, that she could communicate little concerning those important intrigues carried on respecting the different deputies of the first assembly, till, in the latter days of the Revolution, when it became necessary, from the pressure of events, that she should be made a sort of confidante, in order to prevent her from compromising the persons of the Queen and the Princess Lamballe: a trust, of her claim to which her undoubted fidelity was an ample pledge. Still, however, she was often absent from Court at moments of great importance, and was obliged to take her information, upon much which she has recorded, from hearsay, which has led her, as I have before stated, into frequent mistakes.

an awful warning. He had scarcely commenced his inflammatory address to the assembly, when someone, who felt incommoded by the stifling heat of the hall, exclaimed, "Throw open the windows!" The conspirator fancied he heard in this his death sentence. He fainted, and was conducted home in the greatest agitation. Madame de Bouffon was at the Palais Royal when the Duke was taken thither. The Duchess of Orleans was at the palace of the Duke de Penthièvre, her father, while the Duke himself was at the Hotel Thoulouse with me, where he was to dine, and where we were waiting for the Duchess to come and join us, by appointment. But Madame de Bouffon was so alarmed by the state in which she saw the Duke of Orleans that she instantly left the Palais Royal, and despatched his valet express to bring her thither. My sister-in-law sent an excuse to me for not coming to dinner, and an explanation to her father for so abruptly leaving his palace, and hastened home to her husband. It was some days before he recovered; and his father-in-law, his wife, and myself were not without hopes that he would see in this an omen to

prevent him from persisting any longer in his opposition to the royal family.

"The effects of the recall of the popular minister, Neckar, did not satisfy the King. Neckar soon became an object of suspicion to the Court party, and especially to His Majesty and the Queen. He was known to have maintained an understanding with Orleans. The miscarriage of many plans and the misfortunes which succeeded were the result of this connection, though it was openly disavowed. The first suspicion of the coalition arose thus:

"When the Duke had his bust carried about Paris, after his unworthy schemes against the King had been discovered, it was thrown into the mire. Neckar passing, perhaps by mere accident, stopped his carriage, and expressing himself with some resentment for such treatment to a Prince of the blood and a friend of the people, ordered the bust to be taken to the Palais Royal, where it was washed, crowned with laurel, and thence, with Neckar's own bust, carried to Versailles. The King's aunts, coming from Belvue as the procession was upon the road, ordered the guards to

send the men away who bore the busts, that the King and Queen might not be insulted with the sight. This circumstance caused another riot, which was attributed to Their Majesties. The dismission of the minister was the obvious result. It is certain, however, that, in obeying the mandate of exile, Neckar had no wish to exercise the advantage he possessed from his great popularity. His retirement was sudden and secret; and, although it was mentioned that very evening by the Baroness de Staël to the Count de Chinon, so little bustle was made about his withdrawing from France, that it was even stated at the time to have been utterly unknown, even to his daughter.

"Neckar himself ascribed his dismission to the influence of the Polignacs; but he was totally mistaken, for the Duchess de Polignac was the last person to have had any influence in matters of state, whatever might have been the case with those who surrounded her. She was devoid of ambition or capacity to give her weight; and the Queen was not so pliant in points of high import as to allow herself to be governed or overruled, unless her mind was thoroughly convinced. In

that respect, she was something like Catharine II., who always distinguished her favourites from her ministers; but in the present case she had no choice, and was under the necessity of yielding to the boisterous voice of a faction.

"From this epoch, I saw all the persons who had any wish to communicate with the Queen on matters relative to the public business, and Her Majesty was generally present when they came, and received them in my apartments. The Duchess de Polignac never, to my knowledge, entered into any of these state questions; yet there was no promotion in the civil, military, or ministerial department, which she has not been charged with having influenced the Queen to make, though there were few of them who were not nominated by the King and his ministers, even unknown to the Queen herself.

"The prevailing dissatisfaction against Her Majesty and the favourite Polignac now began to take so many forms, and produce effects so dreadful, as to wring her own feelings, as well as those of her royal mistress, with the most intense anguish. Let me mention one gross and

barbarous instance in proof of what I say.

"After the birth of the Queen's second son, the Duke of Normandy, who was afterwards Dauphin, the Duke and Duchess of Harcourt, outrageously jealous of the ascendancy of the governess of the Dauphin, excited the young prince's hatred toward Madame de Polignac to such a pitch that he would take nothing from her hands, but often, young as he was at the time, order her out of the apartment, and treat her remonstrances with the utmost contempt. The Duchess bitterly complained of the Harcourts to the Queen; for she really sacrificed the whole of her time to the care and attention required by this young prince, and she did so from sincere attachment, and that he might not be irritated in his declining state of health. The Queen was deeply hurt at these dissensions between the governor and governess. Her Majesty endeavoured to pacify the mind of the young prince, by literally making herself a slave to his childish caprices, which in all probability would have created the confidence so desired, when a most cruel, unnatural, I may say diabolical, report prevailed, to alienate the child's affections

even from his mother, in making him believe that, owing to his deformity and growing ugliness, she had transferred all her tenderness to his younger brother, who certainly was very superior in health and beauty to the puny Dauphin. Making a pretext of this calumny, the governor of the heir-apparent was malicious enough to prohibit him from eating or drinking anything but what first passed through the hands of his physicians; and so strong was the impression made by this interdict on the mind of the young Dauphin that he never after saw the Queen but with the greatest terror. The feelings of his disconsolate parent may be more readily conceived than described. So may the mortification of his governess, the Duchess de Polignac, herself so tender, so affectionate a mother. Fortunately for himself, and happily for his wretched parents, this royal youth, whose life, though short, had been so full of suffering, died at Versailles on the 4th of June, 1789, and, though only between seven and eight years of age at the time of his decease, he had given proofs of intellectual precocity, which would probably have made continued life, amidst the

scenes of wretchedness which succeeded, anything to him but a blessing.

"The cabals of the Duke of Harcourt, to which I have just adverted, against the Duchess de Polignac, were the mere result of foul malice and ambition. Harcourt wished to get his wife, who was the sworn enemy of Polignac, created governess to the Dauphin instead of the Queen's favourite. Most of the criminal stories against the Duchess de Polignac, and which did equal injury to the Queen, were fabricated by the Harcourts, for the purpose of excluding their rival from her situation.

"Barnave, meanwhile, continued faithful to his liberal principles, but equally faithful to his desire of bringing Their Majesties over to those principles, and making them republican sovereigns. He lost no opportunity of availing himself of my permission for him to call whenever he chose on public business; and he continued to urge the same points, upon which he had before been so much in earnest, although with no better effect. Both the King and Queen looked with suspicion upon Barnave, and with still more suspicion upon his politics.

"The next time I received him, 'Madam,' exclaimed the deputy to me, 'since our last interview I have pondered well on the situation of the King; and, as an honest Frenchman, attached to my lawful sovereign, and anxious for his future prosperous reign, I am decidedly of opinion that his own safety, as well as the dignity of the crown of France, and the happiness of his subjects, can only be secured by his giving his country a constitution, which will at once place his establishment beyond the caprice and the tyranny of corrupt administrations, and secure hereafter the first monarchy in Europe from the possibility of sinking under weak princes, by whom the royal splendour of France has too often been debased into the mere tool of vicious and mercenary noblesse, and sycophantic courtiers. A King, protected by a constitution, can do no wrong. He is unshackled with responsibility. He is empowered with the comfort of exercising the executive authority for the benefit of the nation, while all the harsher duties, and all the censures they create, devolve on others. It is, therefore, madam, through your means, and the well known friendship you have ever evinced for the royal

family, and the general welfare of the French nation, that I wish to obtain a private audience of Her Majesty, the Queen, in order to induce her to exert the never-failing ascendancy she has ever possessed over the mind of our good King, in persuading him to the sacrifice of a small proportion of his power, for the sake of preserving the monarchy to his heirs; and posterity will record the virtues of a prince who has been magnanimous enough, of his own free will, to resign the unlawful part of his prerogatives, usurped by his predecessors, for the blessing and pleasure of giving liberty to a beloved people, among whom both the King and Queen will find many Hampdens and Sidneys, but very few Cromwells. Besides, madam, we must make a merit of necessity. The times are pregnant with events, and it is more prudent to support the palladium of the ancient monarchy than risk its total overthrow; and fall it must, if the diseased excrescences, of which the people complain, and which threaten to carry death into the very heart of the tree, be not lopped away in time by the sovereign himself.'

"I heard the deputy with the greatest attention. I promised to fulfil his commission. The better to execute my task, I retired the moment he left me, and wrote down all I could recollect of his discourse, that it might be thoroughly placed before the Queen the first opportunity.

"When I communicated the conversation to Her Majesty, she listened with the most gracious condescension, till I came to the part wherein Barnave so forcibly impressed the necessity of adopting a constitutional monarchy. Here, as she had done once before, when I repeated some former observations of Barnave to her, Maria Antoinette somewhat lost her equanimity. She rose from her seat, and exclaimed:

"'What! is an absolute prince, and the hereditary sovereign of the ancient monarchy of France, to become the tool of a plebeian faction, who will, their point once gained, dethrone him for his imbecile complaisance? Do they wish to imitate the English Revolution of 1648, and reproduce the sanguinary times of the unfortunate and weak Charles the First? To make France a commonwealth! Well! be it so! But before I advise the

King to such a step, or give my consent to it, they shall bury me under the ruins of the monarchy.'

"'But what answer,' said I, 'does Your Majesty wish me to return to the deputy's request for a private audience?'

"'What answer?' exclaimed the Queen. 'No answer at all is the best answer to such a presumptuous proposition! I tremble for the consequences of the impression their disloyal manœuvres have made upon the minds of the people, and I have no faith whatever in their proffered services to the King. However, on reflection, it may be expedient to temporise. Continue to see him. Learn, if possible, how far he may be trusted; but do not fix any time, as yet, for the desired audience. I wish to apprise the King, first, of his interview with you, Princess. This conversation does not agree with what he and Mirabeau proposed about the King's recovering his prerogatives. Are these the prerogatives with which he flattered the King? Binding him hand and foot, and excluding him from every privilege, and then casting him a helpless dependant on the caprice of a volatile plebeian faction! The French nation is very different from

the English. The first rules of the established ancient order of the government broken through, they will violate twenty others, and the King will be sacrificed, before this frivolous people again organise themselves with any sort of regular government.'

"Agreeably to Her Majesty's commands, I continued to see Barnave. I communicated with him by letter,[1] at his private lodgings at Passy, and at Vitry; but it was long before the Queen could be brought to consent to the audience he solicited.

"Indeed, Her Majesty had such an aversion to all who had declared themselves for any innovation upon the existing power of the monarchy, that she was very reluctant to give audience upon the subject to any person, not even excepting the Princes of the blood. The Count d'Artois himself, leaning as he did to the popular side, had ceased to be welcome. Expressions he had made use of, concerning the necessity for some change, had occasioned the coolness, which was already of considerable standing.

1 Of these letters I was generally the bearer.

"One day the Prince of Conti came to me, to complain of the Queen's refusing to receive him, because he had expressed himself to the same effect as had the Count d'Artois on the subject of the *Tiers États*.[1]

1 I recollect that day perfectly. I was copying some letters for the Princess Lamballe, when the Prince of Conti came in. The Prince lived not only to see, but to feel the errors of his system. He attained a great age. He outlived the glory of his country. Like many others, the first gleam of political regeneration led him into a system, which drove him out of France, to implore the shelter of a foreign asylum, that he might not fall a victim to his own credulity. I had an opportunity of witnessing in his latter days his sincere repentance; and to this it is fit that I should bear testimony. There were no bounds to the execration with which he expressed himself towards the murderers of those victims, whose death he lamented with a bitterness, in which some remorse was mingled, from the impression that his own early errors in favour of the Revolution had unintentionally accelerated their untimely end. This was a source to him of deep and perpetual self-reproach.

There was an eccentricity in the appearance, dress, and manners of the Prince of Conti, which well deserves recording.

He wore, to the very last—and it was in Barcelona, so late as 1803, that I last had the honour of conversing with him—a white rich stuff dress frock coat, of the cut and fashion of Louis XIV. which, being without any collar, had buttons and button-holes from the neck to the bottom of the skirt, and was padded and stiffened with buckram. The cuffs were very large, of a different colour, and turned up to

"'And does your highness,' replied I, 'imagine that the Queen is less displeased with the conduct of the Count d'Artois on that head,

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the elbows. The whole was lined with white satin, which, from its being very much moth-eaten, appeared as if it had been dotted on purpose to show the buckram between the satin lining. His waistcoat was of rich green striped silk, bound with gold lace; the buttons and button-holes of gold; the flaps very large, and completely covering his small clothes; which happened very *àpropos*, for they scarcely reached his knees, over which he wore large striped silk stockings, that came half-way up his thighs. His shoes had high heels, and reached half up his legs; the buckles were small, and set round with paste. A very narrow stiff stock decorated his neck. He carried a hat, with a white feather on the inside, under his arm. His ruffles were of very handsome point lace. His few gray hairs were gathered in a little round bag. The wig alone was wanting to make him a thorough picture of the polished age of the founder of Versailles and Marly.

He had all that princely politeness of manner which so eminently distinguished the old school of French nobility, previous to the Revolution. He was the thorough gentleman, a character by no means so readily to be met with in these days of refinement as one would imagine. He never addressed the softer sex but with ease and elegance, and admiration of their persons.

Could Louis XIV. have believed, had it been told to him when he placed this branch of the Bourbons on the throne of Iberia, that it would one day refuse to give shelter at the Court of Madrid to one of his family, for fear of offending a Corsican usurper!

than she is with you, Prince? I can assure your highness, that at this moment there subsists a very great degree of coolness between Her Majesty and her royal brother-in-law, whom she loves as if he were her own brother. Though she makes every allowance for his political inexperience, and well knows the goodness of his heart and the rectitude of his intentions, yet policy will not permit her to change her sentiments.'

"'That may be,' said the Prince, 'but while Her Majesty continues to honour with her royal presence the Duchess de Polignac, whose friends, as well as herself, are all enthusiastically mad in favour of the constitutional system, she shows an undue partiality, by countenancing one branch of the party and not the other; particularly so, as the great and notorious leader of the opposition, which the Queen frowns upon, is the sister-in-law of this very Duchess de Polignac, and the avowed favourite of the Count d'Artois, by whom, and the councils of the Palais Royal, he is supposed to be totally governed in his political career.'

"'The Queen,' replied I, 'is certainly her own

mistress. She sees, I believe, many persons more from habit than any other motive; to which, your highness is aware, many princes often make sacrifices. Your highness cannot suppose I can have the temerity to control Her Majesty in the selection of her friends, or in her sentiments respecting them.'

"'No,' exclaimed the Prince, 'I imagine not. But she might just as well see any of us; for we are no more enemies of the crown than the party she is cherishing by constantly appearing among them; which, according to her avowed maxims concerning the not sanctioning any but supporters of the absolute monarchy, is in direct opposition to her own sentiments.

"'Who,' continued his highness, 'caused that infernal comedy, *The Marriage of Figaro*, to be brought out, but the party of the Duchess de Polignac?[1] The play is a critique on the whole

1 *Note of the Princess Lamballe.*—The Prince of Conti never could speak of Beaumarchais but with the greatest contempt. There was something personal in this exasperation. Beaumarchais had satirized the Prince. *The Spanish Barber* was founded on a circumstance which happened at a country house between Conti and a young lady, during

royal family, from the drawing up of the curtain to its fall. It burlesques the ways and manners of every individual connected with the Court of Versailles. Not a scene but touches some of their characters. Are not the Queen herself and the Count d'Artois lampooned and caricatured in the garden scenes, and the most slanderous ridicule cast upon their innocent evening walks on the terrace? Does not Beaumarchais plainly show in it, to every impartial eye, the means which the Countess Diana has taken publicly to demonstrate her jealousy of the Queen's ascendancy over the Count d'Artois? Is it not from the same sentiment that she has roused the jealousy of the Countess d'Artois against Her Majesty?'

"'All these circumstances,' observed I, 'the King prudently foresaw when he read the manuscript, and caused it to be read to the Queen, to convince her of the nature of its characters and

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the reign of Louis XV., when intrigues of every kind were practised and almost sanctioned. The poet has exposed the Prince by making him the Doctor Bartolo of his play. The affair which supplied the story was hushed up at Court, and the Prince was only punished by the loss of his mistress, who became the wife of another.

the dangerous tendency likely to arise from its performance. Of this your highness is aware. It is not for me to apprise you that, to avert the excitement inevitable from its being brought upon the stage, and under a thorough conviction of the mischief it would produce in turning the minds of the people against the Queen, His Majesty solemnly declared that the comedy should not be performed in Paris; and that he would never sanction its being brought before the public on any stage in France.'

"'Bah! bah! madam!' exclaimed Conti. 'The Queen has acted like a child in this affair, as in many others. In defiance of His Majesty's determination, did not the Queen herself, through the fatal influence of her favourite, whose party wearied her out by continued importunities, cause the King to revoke his express mandate? And what has been the consequence of Her Majesty's ungovernable partiality for these Polignacs?'

"'You know, Prince,' said I, 'better than I do.'

"'The proofs of its bad consequences,' pursued his highness, 'are more strongly verified

than ever by your own withdrawing from the Queen's parties since her unreserved acknowledgment of her partiality (fatal partiality!) for those who will be her ruin; for they are her worst enemies.'

"'Pardon me, Prince,' answered I, 'I have not withdrawn myself from the Queen, but from the new parties, with whose politics I cannot identify myself, besides some exceptions I have taken against those who frequent them.'

"'Bah! bah!' exclaimed Conti, 'your sagacity has got the better of your curiosity. All the wit and humour of that traitor Beaumarchais never seduced you to cultivate his society, as all the rest of the Queen's party have done.'

"'I never knew him to be accused of treason.'

"'Why, what do you call a fellow, who sent arms to the Americans before the war was declared, without his sovereign's consent?'

"'In that affair, I consider the ministers as criminal as himself; for the Queen, to this day, believes that Beaumarchais was sanctioned by them; and, you know, Her Majesty has ever since had an insuperable dislike to both De Man-

repas and De Vergennes. But I have nothing to do with these things.'

"'Yes, yes, I understand you, Princess. Let her romp and play with the *compate vous*,[1] but who will *compatire*[2] (make allowance for) her folly. Bah! bah! bah! She is inconsistent, Princess. Not that I mean by this to insinuate that the Duchess is not the sincere friend and well-wisher of the Queen Her immediate existence, her interest, and that of her family, are all dependent on the royal bounty. But can the Duchess answer for the same sincerity towards the Queen, with respect to her innumerable guests? No! Are not the sentiments of the Duchess's sister-in-law, the Countess Diana, in direct opposition to the absolute monarchy? Has she not always been an enthusiastic advocate for all those that have supported the American war? Who was it that crowned, at a public assembly, the democratical straight hairs of Dr. Franklin? Why the same Madame Countess Diana! Who was *capa turpa*

1 A kind of game of forfeits, introduced for the diversion of the royal children and those of the Duchess de Polignac.

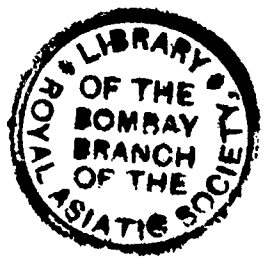
2 This play upon the words is untranslateable.

in applauding the men who were forming the American constitution at Paris? Madame Countess Diana! Who was it, in like manner, that opposed all the Queen's arguments against the political conduct of France and Spain, relative to the war with England, in favour of the American Independence? The Countess Diana! Not for the love of that rising nation, or for the sacred cause of liberty; but from a taste for notoriety, a spirit of envy and jealousy, an apprehension lest the personal charms of the Queen might rob her of a part of those affections, which she herself exclusively hoped to alienate from that abortion, the Countess d'Artois, in whose service she is maid of honour, and hand-maid to the Count. My dear Princess, these are facts proved. Beaumarchais has delineated them all. Why, then, refuse to see me? Why withdraw her former confidence from the Count d'Artois, when she lives in the society which promulgates anti-monarchical principles? These are sad evidences of Her Majesty's inconsistency. She might as well see the Duke of Orleans'——

"Here my feelings overwhelmed me. I could

contain myself no longer. The tears gushed from my eyes.

"'Oh, Prince!' exclaimed I, in a bitter agony of grief—'Oh Prince! touch not that fatal string. For how many years has he not caused these briny tears of mine to flow from my burning eyes! The scalding drops have nearly parched up the spring of life!'"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